

ORIGINAL
FAMILIAR CORRESPONDENCE
BETWEEN
RESIDENTS IN INDIA.

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FAMILIAR CORRESPONDENCE

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RESIDENTS IN INDIA

INCLUDING SKETCHES OF JAVA

ETC ETC

EDINBURGH

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To J R T Esq

THE Editor gladly avails herself of permission to dedicate the following brief Memoir and Correspondence, intended to record the thoughts and feelings of a few kindred minds thrown together at a Mofussil station in Bengal, to ONE who thoroughly appreciated the abilities, and highly esteemed the amiable character, of the lamented subject of them, and who still bears in affectionate remembrance the long departed friend of his early manhood

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INTRODUCTION.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS ADDISON, whose letters to various friends form the present volume of "Indian Reminiscences," was born at Calcutta in 1792, and was at an early age sent to England for his education. His father, the late John Addison, Esq., was in the civil service of the Honourable East India Company. He held the situation of Judge of Nattore, at the period of his son's birth, and, subsequently, other situations high in the service, and, at the time of his death, was Resident of Bauleah.

Mr Addison, senior, as the nearest collateral descendant, was heir-at-law to the cele-

brated moralist—that great man having only a daughter in the direct line, who died unmarried. George, when in his fifth year, was entered at Hackney School, then a celebrated place of education for youth, under the charge of Dr Newcombe. There he highly distinguished himself by ability and application to his studies and his name still remains in the old school-house, engraved in characters of gold, with that of others the most eminent of Dr Newcombe's pupils. Having finished his course of study at this academy, he embarked for India being then in his sixteenth year. Without entering into the details of his useful career suffice it to say, that in the course of a few years he became private secretary to J S Raffles, Esq (afterwards Sir Stamford Raffles) then governor of Java.

The duties of this important situation George Addison fulfilled to the entire satisfaction of the governor and all connected with him and was rapidly entering upon a

career of extended usefulness, when he was, in the unscruable providence of God, cut off in his twenty-second year, by a fever incidental to the climate of Java.

No better testimony can be given to his merits than the following letter from the governor of Java, on the melancholy occasion of his secretary's decease.—

Extract of a Letter from the Governor of Java, to the Secretary of the Supreme Government of Bengal —

BATAVIA, 21st Jan 1815

“ SIR,—I am directed by the Honourable the Lieut-Governor in Council, to report to you the death of Mr G A Addison, assistant secretary to the revenue and judicial departments

“ In communicating this lamented occurrence, the Lieut-Governor in Council is anxious to take the opportunity of expressing the high sense he entertains of the talents, merits, and services of Mr Addison. His abilities and acquirements were remarkably great, his application and exertions

unwearied and his personal conduct as amiable as his public services were eminent.

'The Lieut.-Governor in Council, therefore sincerely regrets his loss in every point of view

(Signed)

CHARLES ASSEY

Secretary to the Government.

LETTERS.

LETTER I

Calcapore, March 1811

MY DEAR MRS —,

YOUR note of the 21st has only this moment come to my hands, owing to my missing my dák-wala* on the road, for I am again playing truant, and have come in to see my friend Mr W*****, a thing to which I would make all *blue*† considerations give way I leave this place again, however, to-morrow

I am glad you agree with me in opinion of the “Calcutta Magazine” It is a wretched compilation I have just received the third number, and find, as I expected, a progressive deterioration Really, if you would give me a little help, we could make up as good a “*Mofussil Magazine*,” what do you

* Postman

† Indigo works

think of a trial? I think I could muster up a respectable force poetry and belles-lettres from — Hinduism, and general topics and poetry from Colonel S***** eccentricity from Major K***** anecdote and poetry from Mr W***** Arabic, Persian, and a little poetry from Captain H***** Bangaloe, and perhaps something else from R***** no politics from M***** French philosophy from Campo a chance of Marsh *et quant à moi*, I would be the string to tie the nose-gav together with and in taking on myself the mechanical part of transcribing I should not have the least severe duty First Number to be published first July—hope to receive encouragement from obliging and erudite correspondents—shall spare no exertions to deserve their favour &c. &c. &c. Is not this a very *famous* proposal? In truth, as I am now about to visit the jungles, whence I shall not return till the manufacturing season is over I know nothing fairer than to get rid of my own ennui by transferring it to you here, who have society as a counterbalance. Pray do not laugh at me.

Thirty letters to make into words is a little too bad! I am not quite an *CEdipus* moreover it

is contrary to all anagrammatic rules to make up letters or words into more than one word ; I will, however, puzzle at it. As to the trick through which I blundered so awkwardly at your house, it is gone past redemption ; in vain I have set my wits to work at it—it has completely foiled them, but as it has played the same trick to you, (who, I believe, *once* knew it as well as myself,) I ought not to complain

As to Gertrude—doctors, I believe, differ. It is originally German, and as all the *g*'s in this language are hard, perhaps the pronouncing it thus is most correct, but the soft manner is, in my opinion, most suitable to an English mouth ; and, though the tide is rather against me, this is the way in which I always pronounce the lady's name *Mais l'un ou l'autre se dit*, and you may therefore take your choice

The "Armenian" is not so good as I had expected, but, as you are an admirer of Schiller's, I will send it to you. It has, of course, a sufficiency of *horror*, (for me more than enough) One person observes, that, though he has a retentive memory, yet he cannot recollect the number of murders he has committed. It concludes by *killing off*, with a

stroke of lightning the last of the *dramatis personæ*.

Lord Valentia is an inelegant writer and a very stupid observer. At Ráj mahal he must have *shut* his eyes, for he says—"a terrible fire burned the palace to the ground, and the river carried away nearly the whole of the town. No vestiges, even, of its ancient magnificence remain! Now, positively the whole town is one vestige of ancient magnificence. I spent a day among its ruins last year and saw nothing for miles, but ruins of magnificent palaces. There is stone and marble enough to build a couple of great cities " in these degenerate days nor are these all on the ground. High walls numberless windows, grand gateways long galleries and never-ending colonnades, on every side refute Lord Valentia.

I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you beat somebody at chess this evening. Do not play with Mr R—— you do not fight him on equal ground for your attention is rather more volatile than his. He plays an excellent Spanish game that is, he may bequeath an unfinished one to his great grandsons.—I am yours sincerely

G. A. ADDISON

LETTER II

March 1811

I SHALL be obliged to you for the "Italian" I perfectly coincide with you as to "Udolpho." It is inferior not only to the "Italian," but also to the "Sicilian Romance" The explaining away the mysteries in it, is very ill managed, in this respect, the "Romance of the Pyrenees" excels it much There are two or three little pieces of poetry, which, though not comparable with Charlotte Smith's, yet are, I think, neat The great fame it has acquired rests on its descriptions, and, certainly, these are given in very elegant poetical prose, but they are too numerous, and all are too much wrought Not one of them gives a distinct landscape—"rocks roll on rocks, and floods push floods along" A real master in this art gives the scene to your eye at one stroke—witness Homer's night-piece, the finest in all poetry, in five lines.

Even in the "Pyrenees, where Mrs Radcliffe is said to rise above herself to me she only gives a fine idea of chaos ' where hot, cold, moist, and dry ' strive still for mastery and bring to battle their embryon atoms. What with the Mediterranean on one side, and the towering hills on the other I find myself quenched in a boggy syrtis, neither sea nor good dry land, and like the fiend, o'er bog or steep through strait, rough dense or rare with head hands, wings or feet, pursue my way and swim or sink, or walk, or creep or fly

Did you ever setting aside the beauty of the language try to view with your mind's eye one of those landscapes, ' in all its bearings, as given by Mrs Radcliffe? I defy you to form unassisted by your own ideas, a good picture from her. It is confusion worse confounded " but nothing is harder than this art of description

A certain philosopher once endeavoured to give a blind man the idea of a beautiful *red colour* and, accordingly having gone through many sagacious definitions, the blind man was asked to what he assimilated in his mind the fine idea the philosopher had tried to impress on his mind he answered that from all he had heard, he could suppose

that the only thing resembling it must be *brown sugar* !

I return the “*Lady of the Lake*”—the perusal of which has pleased me much.

Whatever Walter Scott writes must be well worth the reading, and must contain sparks of true poetic fire ; but what pity that he only sparkles who might blaze ! There are some fine passages in this poem . the description of Ellen is one of the most beautiful The opening of the 4th canto is also pretty

I am much surprised at Scott's being able to preserve so equable a tone throughout a poem , he never did this before , here, however, he flows throughout almost without a ripple , but whether this is praise to his poem or not, is another matter , he certainly never sinks to the faults of the “*Lay*” and “*Marmion*,” and on the other hand, he never rises, or rather soars, to their beauties. Without professing to be a judge, I can of course form an opinion, and I think that the “*Lady of the Lake*” is equal, or even superior to “*Marmion*,” but very far indeed inferior to the “*Lay of the Last Minstrel*”

What I have before particularly admired in him, was his very happy choice of measures—making his

lines echo to his sense thus, in my favourite poem
 the Lay how exquisite is the abruptness with
 which he relates the death of Branksome's chief —

"When the streets of high Dunedin
 Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
 And heard the slogan's deadly yell—
 Then the chief of Branksome fell."

How well chosen a measure is the following for
 pathetic subjects,—

"Tears of an imprison'd maiden
 Mix with my polluted stream;
 Margaret of Branksome, sorrow laden,
 Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam."

The following even imitates the pace of his
 horse —

"O swiftly can speed
 My dapple-grey steed,
 That drinks of the Teviot clear;
 Before break of day
 The warrior gun may
 Again will I be here."

And the following too, though of the simplest
 ballad kind possible perhaps from that very cause
 has much beauty and even pathos,—

"'Tis not that at the ring they ride,
 (Though William at the ring rides well,)
 But that my steed his wine will chide
 If 'tis not fill'd by Rombella."

The parenthesis above is admirable. This, too, I admire highly, —

“ And each St Clair was buried there,
 With candle, with book, and with knell,
 But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung,
 The dirge of lovely Rosabelle ”

A thousand other instances might be given of the imitative nicety of his ear, after which I cannot congratulate him on the following choice of a funereal measure —

“ The hand of the reaper
 Takes the ears that are hoary,
 But the voice of the weeper
 Wails manhood in glory,
 The autumn winds rushing,
 Waft the leaves that are searest,
 But our flower was in flushing,
 When blighting was nearest ”

To me this measure has not a particle of woe in it, and the catch that the voice is obliged to make in reading it, inspires any thing but solemnity, which should be slow and equable — I do not much admire, either, such verse as the following —

“ Heaven send it happy dew,
 Earth lend it sap anew ”

Enough of hypercriticism I return the second volume of Anderson's Poets

LETTER III.

April 1811.

I RETURN Kirke White whom I have kept thus long because it was necessary to *more* than read him. It is paying an ill compliment to the author to say that his book excited so base a passion in my heart as envy—yet I must confess this to have been the case—and I *do* envy him both his head and his heart, above all I have ever known or read of. It is no slight praise and yet is strictly true to say that he is the most faultless character to be met with in our literary annals he at once possesses genius without eccentricity piety without fanaticism learning without pedantry and, what is more rare, *with common sense*. His public life was not more pure than his private and whatever be the relation of life in which he is to be judged, it will equally with any other, successfully stand the test. In short, to sum up his whole character, he never said

what he could have wished unsaid ; nor did he ever do that which he could afterwards have wished undone. And who can claim an equal praise ? Not Bacon, “ the wisest, noblest, *meanest* of mankind ” Not Spencer, for H K. White would never have stooped to remind even his sovereign of a promise. Not Milton, “ such was his malignity, that hell grew darker at his frown ” Not Shakespeare, H K White never stole deer. Not Dryden, who has written what he ought to have blushed to read. Not Addison, who “ hated for arts that caused himself to rise ” Not Pope, peevish and unamiable Not Swift, detestable. Not Savage, wild and dissipated. Not Johnson, overbearing and morose. Not, in short, any one that I can call to memory, save Sir Thomas More, Sir Isaac Newton, and Cowper The first is inferior in amiableness, for in controversy he was sometimes scurrilous, the latter was not, in my opinion, of piety so *pure*, though quite as fervent, he had, too, some of the eccentricities of genius, but Newton rises far superior to them all, and is incontestably the greatest and noblest character that ever existed—to him Kirke White must yield You will not thank me for this prosing, but the truth is, that I am like a Bengalee tattoo, or a hack

post horse—I set off limpingly enough but when I got warm I trot most furiously. Indeed, it is well that you have escaped with only *prosing*. I did sit down to scribble a sonnet to his memory but by the time I got to the middle I discovered it was so every way unworthy of it, that I tore it up or, *poetised* this wretched half I bade the winds disperse in empty air. The poems to the Primrose and Rosemary are unquestionably the most beautiful in the collection, (were I *punnuoally* given, I should say they are the *flowers* of the work.) In the Ode to Morning too there is one passage I highly admire it is—

“ The lark has her gay song begun,
She leaves her grassy nest,
And soars, ‘till the sunrise sun
Gleams on her speckled breast.”

But I should trouble you with several sheets were I to point out all the beauties. I do not however mean to strain my fondness for hyperbole so far as to assert that Kirke White is equal, as a poet to many that I could name but if we judge of him as Douglas wishes to be judged it is fair to infer from what he *wrote* that he *would* have equalled or surpassed them all. I send you “ les Lettres de

Madame de Sevigné," and hope the perusal will give you pleasure. Some of them are written with a wonderful deal of ease, playfulness, and wit, and all abound in *felicities* of expression, but, on the whole, in point of *style only* I like them less than Rousseau's, and much less than Lady Mary's in point both of *style* and *matter*. *Mais chacun à son gout*. By the by, the matter of these letters, as it generally turns on petty intrigues at the court of Louis le Grand, is not very interesting to *nous autres*, and I sometimes think, that in reading through works where *style* is the *only* recommendation, *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*. The history of a broomstick can never be interesting, though all the powers of Swift be exerted on it. You were speaking the other night of Baron Trenck, I forgot at the time to tell you what became of him after getting released from Magdeburgh, which was effected through the intercessions of the Empress-Queen with the King of Prussia. You recollect he was in the service of Austria, and was imprisoned in Magdeburgh by the King of Prussia, for having made an attempt to carry him off to the Austrians. One part of his punishment was the being chained, *standing*, to a wall, and made to speak every half

hour, for five years! When he got free from prison he went to live at Aix la-Chapelle, married there, forgot all his former cares and lived in good health and spirits, until the French Revolution came on when he foolishly went to Paris to take a part in it, and was guillotined by order of Robespierre in 1794. A delay of two days would have saved him for the tyrant was in that time himself brought *à la lanterne*.

I have written to B***** for "Gertrude of Wyoming" which shall be sent the moment it arrives.

I enclose what I before spoke of—the rhyme to "porringer." You must not forget that it was an extemporaneous effusion in a noisy party after dinner. Have the goodness to return it, nor do I give you permission to make a comment for it would be a shame to allow you to commence a never ending labour and such would be the criticizing what is and was meant for pure *doggerel*. My prospects are here so bad—the indigo dying so fast and so little appearance of rain, that I trust you will excuse me for having tried to drown despair in ink.

P.S.—H. K. White in his fifth number of "Melancholy Hours," gives a very well written essay

on the sonnet; but as neither there, nor in any English book, have I seen the laws laid down for the rigidly legitimate sonnet, and as this is at present—from the example of Bowles, Charlotte Smith, Miss Seward, and others—the favourite poem, its mechanism ought to be known, though not, in my opinion, adopted, for our language is averse to the “oft recurrent rhyme.” It is almost unnecessary to observe, that the first grand requisite is the limitation to fourteen lines, and these lines must be throughout of the same measure; this measure should be of the most noble order the language possesses—in English of ten, in French of twelve syllables. The arrangement must be two *quatrains* followed by two *tercets*, each of these must be closed by the sense; it is not necessary, however, that every *line* should be *distinct*—“the sentence may overflow the verse, but must not transgress the stanza.” The two quatrains must have the same rhymes, and must be arranged similarly, that is, if the first quatrain have its first and third, second and fourth, lines rhyming, the second must dispose its rhymes similarly, or, if the first have its first and fourth, second and third, alike, so also must the second; and the rhymes of the first and

third, first and fourth, second and third, or second and fourth of the first, must correspond with those of the corresponding lines in the second. The first tercet must commence with a couplet, and the remaining four lines may be arranged at pleasure it is required, however that this arrangement should differ from that of the quatrains, nor must any rhyme in the tercets correspond with those of the quatrains. These are the grand essential rules but there are other niceties to be observed. I before observed, that it is necessary to have a rest at the end of each quatrain, and of the first tercet there should also be a slight one at the end of each line of the quatrains the one at the end of the first tercet, also need be very slight. Add to this, there must not be one feeble line, nor the repetition of a single word throughout—

“ Apollon de ce poëme bannit la licence,
Lui-même en mesure le nombre et la cadence,
Defendit qu'un vers folle y put jamais entrer
Ni qu'un mot déjà mis osât s'y remontrer ”

Boileau gives an admirable description of its mechanism in the following four lines —

(Apollon) “ Voulut qu'en deux quatrains de mesure pareille,
La rime avec deux sons frappât huit fois l'oreille
Et qu'en suite six vers artistement rangés,
Fussent en deux tercets par le sens partagés.

When *à ces rigoureuses lois* he added, that strict unity of subject &c &c are required, I think it is no longer to be wondered that *cet heureux phénomène est encore à trouver*. It is certain that, on the above strict model, we have not a single sonnet in our language; even that which Capel Lofft addresses to Kirke White to rebuke him for the irregular construction of his sonnets, is itself irregular. However, to compensate for this, we have *quatorzains* far more beautiful than any Italy or France can show. The most elegant arrangement for these is three elegiac stanzas and a couplet. There is something peculiarly melodious in this form. Despreaux says—

“ Pour enfermer son sens dans la borne prescrite,
La mesure est toujours trop longue, ou trop petite ”

But this is the last difficulty a poet feels, he can always amplify or compress a thought with taste. The English muse has dedicated this poem to serious and melancholy subjects, and indeed the plaintive querulous strain becomes it admirably, but the French employ it also for light and gay themes. As an example, I will copy one of Fontenelle's, which is *almost* rigidly correct —

APOLLON ET DAPHNÉ,

" Je suis, crioit jadis Apollon à Daphné,
Lorsque tout hors d'haleine il couroit après elle,
Et lui contoit pourtant la longue
Des rares qualités dont il étoit orné—

" Je suis le dieu des vers Je suis bel esprit né—
Mais les vers n'étoient point le charme de la belle
Je sais jouer du luth—arrêtez! Bagatelle!
Le luth ne pouvait rien sur ce cœur obstiné,

" Je connais la vertu de la moindre racine;
Je suis, n'en doutez point, dieu de la médecine;
Daphné couroit plus vite à ce mot si fatal,

" Mais s'il eut dit—Voyez quelle est votre conquête;
Je suis un jeune dieu—beau, galant, libéral:
Daphné, sur ma parole, aurait tourné la tête.

To be true to his sense, and true to his fame,"
this sonnet is *untranslatable* but merely to do it
into English as our old translators say is easy
enough. The following is my attempt —

APOLLO AND DAPHNE.

I am, Apollo cried, as Daphne he pursued,
And weary out of breath, pursued the nymph in vain;
I am, the godhead cried—and told the lengthened train
Of all the wondrous gifts with which he was endued—

I am the God of Verse—was born with talents rare—
But gentle poetry ne'er thrill'd the maid with bliss:
Nay stop, I play the lute,—the merest trifle this—
The lute no power had to stop the flying fair

No root so mean, he cried, but well its powers I know,
Besides, fair maid, to me you all your physic owe
Shock'd at the very word coy Daphne faster ran

But had the god, more wise, in gentle accents said,
In me behold your slave—a gay, gallant, young man,
Fair Daphne, on my word, had turn'd her beauteous head

In the above, it is true, I have transgressed the law of similar rhymes for the quatrains—but I did this purposely, as being repugnant to an English ear; it was easy enough to have observed it I could have eked it out with “embued,” “rude,” “strain,” “again” But this postscript is, I think, sufficiently long I believe I had better not offer as an apology for it, “that I have nothing else to do;” and yet I have no other.

LETTER IV

April 1811

I AM glad to hear B has sent you "Gertrude of Wyoming" You say you do not *very* much like it. I am not surprised at this more was to have been expected from the author of "Pleasures of Hope." The truth is were he less diffident of his powers—and would he give us his *first* conceptions, he would perhaps be the greatest poet of the age but he has in this poem so touched and retouched every part, that all the greater and bolder beauties are frittered away He has so laboured at it that even his meaning is sometimes lost in his art and it is a general rule, that verse (and prose too) is bad which is not to be understood at the first reading and here I must confess that I read passages twice over and oftener and sometimes after all did not understand them he has forgotten that the chief art should be to conceal the art However in spite of all this, in my opinion the beauties are so

numerous as to overbalance much the defects. How particularly beautiful is the Death Song of the Indian Chief! The poem is worthy of Campbell, though not sufficiently so,—read it again, and you will taste the beauties. I could point out fifty exquisite passages. As to what I was writing on Kinke White, I told you the truth when I said I tore them up, neither were they finished, however, in lieu of them, to invite reciprocity, I send you my meditations by moonlight* last night. The poetical merit of the trifle is slight enough, but it is a true transcript of the general tone of my feelings when by myself. It is strange, as you observed of music, that this sombre train of thoughts, though exciting the keenest sensations of grief, should at the same time give us so exquisite a delight; for myself, I would not part with them, though generally accompanied by melancholy to the greatest depression of spirits, on any account. In my opinion, “musing to madness,” if a person could analyse his feelings, would be found to be very far indeed from painful, and even *melancholy*.

* These lines were published by the Editor in a work entitled “Indian Reminiscences,” published in 1837, by E. Bull, 19 Hollis Street.

madness perhaps, is only another name for excess or intoxication of blissful sensations but lest you think me *mad* I will not broach any more such heterodox opinions.

I send you two volumes of poetry, written by sister muses. The first, Mrs Cowley's "Siege of Acro" is of course borne out by the subject, but as a poem, in my opinion it is very indifferent. I cannot conceive how such harsh and low lines as occur can have been penned by "Anna Matilda, who among all her faults, was never accused of a heavy or inelegant muse.

The other "Epistles on Women" by Lucy Aikin I admire much though less is argued than might have been. She has the strong side of the argument, but fails to push us home as she ought to do. It is not usual now-a-days to see a poem free of distorted conceits, and barbarous new-coined phrases yet this is perfectly easy and ample, it might have been written in the age of Pope and I think you will like it. A tempting "broad river of margin, (as the author of "Pursuits of Literature" terms it,) has invited my pencil to be very busy and troublesome to all who may henceforth open the book. It is a trick I have but I never yield to it except

when I like the book ; and as I readily pardon the writer of any notes I meet with, I have a right to expect to be pardoned myself.

The rain has fallen here abundantly, and all my sowings will be completed , but as an indigo planter ought never to be contented, I must inform you that this rain has come so late that I have no right to expect a good season. As *barometers*, though so keenly susceptible of the slightest change of weather, we are not to be relied on, for I never yet saw one of us at the point "*set fair*"—always too much or too little rain or sunshine.

LETTER V

A JEU D'ESPRIT

April 1811.

You were perfectly right in censuring me for venturing a comparison to any of the dames ' who on Olympus dwell.' Such comparisons are I confess *odious*—for if one may trust to the accounts given by their worshippers, and to the vestiges remaining of them, they were altogether a parcel of ugly old ladies. Madam Juno first and foremost, was particularly famous for her frowns, and was always looking sour at and scolding her lord and master—(a thing I trust you never do) besides, old Homer positively says she had eyes like a *bullock* ; which do not give me by any means an idea of extraordinary beauty. It is on record too that she was the inventress of curtain-lectures—which is abominable. Next comes Minerva and though I have followed Pope in terming her *blue-*

eyed, yet I am not sure but the Greek term might be translated *sea-green*, and that, you must allow, would not be a vastly becoming colour • moreover, to reason *analogically*, she must have been coarse, vulgar, and hard-featured, for she was a great *bruiser*, and all the *Billingsgateians* who are fond of the pugilistic science are universally so As to Venus herself, though I dare say she was well enough for a *blacksmith's* wife, yet I suspect she was not so handsome as she would be thought, Would so gallant a young man as Diomed have wounded a handsome lady, do you think? It must have been that he took her either for a *man* or a *witch*! neither of which suppositions is very much in her favour, and though Paris did give her the golden apple as the prize of beauty, yet his reasons are very well known It was no great compliment to *pay* her for promising that a handsomer woman than herself—namely, Helen—should fall in love with him; and this was the real state of the case Besides, there is another little thing which ought not to be omitted Virgil says that Æneas and Achates discovered her to be a goddess by her “widely spreading ambrosial scents around” Now, in my opinion, a lady must be very disagreeable who

resembles a *musk-rat*. With regard to Thetis's feet, the poets all say she was *silver-hoof'd*—and surely that must have been very ugly. As to Hebe's *mouth* I will give her credit for a good one—*bar-maids* are generally pretty and such it seems was her office. I hope, however she did not spoil it by *drinking* any of the *spirity* liquors she carried. For Diana you owe me no thanks her name "*Hecate*, is quite enough to give an idea of her beauty. Shakespeare very properly terms her an old midnight hag. That I have not been writing scandal, is proved by Mr Clarke's having brought to England the famously-beautiful Ceres of Eleusis—it wants only a *nose*. The sphinx of Cairo too was called by the ancients a model of beauty and it has lips as thick as a negro's or as a descendant of the House of Austria. Besides, are not antiquarians continually confounding the gods and goddesses in their discussions on coins?—which does not say very much for the beauty of the latter. I recollect to have seen a medal myself which had certainly a figure on it but whether Vulcan or Venus could not be precisely ascertained it had something in its hand which resembled equally a *hammer* and a *looking-glass*, so that you

must not accuse me again of being hyperbolical
As to the heroes and demigods of my rebus, I was
only complimenting their taste—but after all I must
confess you are quite right, and all your strictures
very just—that is as far as they refer to *me*, for,
not content with having lugged all the members of
the Pantheon to your feet, I should probably have
next attacked the sylphs and gnomes, and then
perhaps have made the flowers and animals contri-
bute. I will give you Shakespeare's description of
my style I think he must have had me in his
mind's eye by anticipation,—

— “Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,
Thrice-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical ”

I must really try to correct myself, but I despair
—a thousand pardons for all this nonsense

LETTER VI

April 1811.

H***** sent an excuse so that I had no chess. When I returned from S***** a rather late head aching and brain conglomerated, (a bad workman must find fault with his tools) I sat down to my desk resolved on complying with your request * but in vain. After more than two hours labouring I found that I positively could not produce a single couplet and I was obliged to go to bed—not to sleep but to brood over my mortification all night and now comes your letter to increase it. Pray do pity me. I shall cut with the muse after such scurvy treatment. This is really the case As to attempting again I do not know when my pride will sufficiently recover from the wound to think of such a thing it is horrible to be so deserted at one's utmost need.

* He had been asked to compose some verses on a given subject

I send Campbell, and shall come over to defend myself in an hour or two.

You are mistaken in me very much, to suppose that I should *cavil* at any petty error, even did there exist one, which I deny I know,

“ ’Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,
But the joint force and full result of all , ”

and even had there been a fault, do you think that I should have carped at it? Besides—

“ Great wits may sometimes gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend ”

Should you not think him a little too much of a snarler, who should accuse the sun of want of brilliancy because there are a few spots on its disc? I assure you I am not such an one

LETTER VII

Calcutta April 1811

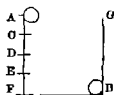
I AM obliged to you for the account of the 'perpetual motion, though I must confess myself so *judaic* as not to give Mr Chaumés credit for having made this grand discovery. In my opinion "perpetual motion" is still a desideratum. But I ought to give my reasons for this dissent.

In this account, though I have read it at least half-a-dozen times, I can form no idea of the machine. But whether this arise from the vagueness of the account, or from my stupidity is of no consequence it does not affect the question. Mr C asserts, that the machine he has invented is, if I may so express it, an *automaton* in which the power and resistance, by *alternating* without loss keep up an eternal motion. But the mere description of such a machine is not sufficient a demon-

stration of its principles (which is here wanting) is perfectly indispensable, and even in the description it seems that he has *not* attained his desired end, for it says, “the author has been obliged to adapt several sets of wheels to his machine, in order to moderate and regulate its effect.” Now, as the first requisite in the solution of perpetual motion is, that it be on no account aided by any external cause, it follows, either that these auxiliary sets of wheels be also on the same construction, or that Mr Chaumés has failed. But if these auxiliary sets of wheels *be* on the same construction, it then also follows, that they do possess the same blemishes as the original ones, and want, therefore, other similar sets of wheels to “*moderate and regulate their effect,*” and so on for ever. I consider, then, that he has not succeeded. I admit perfectly the justice of his definition “perpetual motion is obtained when the effect alternately becomes the cause, and the cause the effect,” but this, according to all the at present received laws of motion, is a thing impossible. (As to the wearing out of the materials, this is a futile objection.) But “friction” is an obstacle not to be overcome; for this there is no remedy but a *vacuum*; and where is this to be

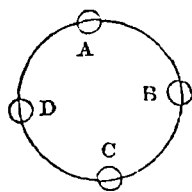
found? Even in a *vacuum* there would still exist the friction-internal of the several parts of the machine and though this be allowed to be ever so slight, yet it will in the end destroy any *quantity* of motion. The only attempt at demonstrating this problem I meet with in M Laurin's Newton p 191 who entirely refutes it. It is as follows —

Let the height, A F be divided into four equal parts, A C C D D E and E F suppose then a body to be at A which is let fall this



body will acquire (by the certain laws of motion) an increased force of 1 in falling to the spot C let this force be applied to a body at B then let an additional force of 1 which the body at A will have acquired from falling from C to D be also applied to the body at B and these two forces of 1 will be equal to a force of 2 which will be sufficient to raise that body from B to G which will in falling from thence, raise the other body from F to A—and so on alternately for ever (N.B.—The force acquired by falling from D to F will suffice to keep the machine in play while the bodies are alternately rising and falling) But M Laurin demonstrates all this to be wrong because the two

forces of one are not equal to one force of two, for, according to the laws of motion, the same forces applied to equal bodies in rest and in motion do not produce similar effects from dissimilarity of reaction. I fear much that you will not find this to be very clear, and yet I quite feel the truth of it. If it were not from reasons similar to the above, and from a thousand others that might be adduced, nothing could be easier than perpetual motion—the following even would solve it—Let four bodies, A, B, C, and D, be always equally acted on by a centripetal motion, let then a centrifugal motion of ten be applied to the body, A, this will bring it to B, where it will communicate its force to B, and itself stop, B will rush with this force of ten to C, and so on C to D, and D to A again, where in the mean time another body must have been placed; so that four may always be at rest, and one always travelling—which shall impart precisely that impetus which it shall receive,—a thing perfectly absurd



Excuse me for all this nonsense; but when once I begin I cannot end. In me, therefore, there is a better solution of the “perpetual motion” than

in the paper you have sent me. I have heard some impertinent people say that a lady's tongue deserves this appellation, but this is false and malicious.

As to Miss R****'s riddle, dining out yesterday and other matters made me (with shame I confess) forget it however since the receipt of your note I have puzzled my brain at it, and think I have succeeded even better than Mr Chaumés,—

If sage Pythagoras be wrong,
No soul can to a fish belong
Yet, when poor Jonas was confined,
A whale contained both soul and mind.
The sparks divine it could not keep,
For soon the Prophet left the deep.
That whales ne'er go to Heaven nor Hell,
I think I may assert full well;
Nor Purgatory can they hope,
Since they're no interest with the Pope.

Is this the right answer? I send another duplicate, and return you very many thanks for those I yesterday received.

LETTER VIII

April 1811

YOUR note I should have answered on the night I received it, but that the lateness of the hour, and my wish to read more than once the two poems you sent me, prevented. The next morning, I set off to my *indigoterie*, and here I have been so busily employed *burying my talent*, in the shape of indigo seed, that I trust you will excuse the tardiness of my reply. The perusal of the poetry has given me great pleasure, in the sentiments I of course perfectly coincide—and I think the whole very forcibly imagined. Some of the passages are beautiful; but as it is wrong to speak in *generals*, I will point out what parts I particularly admire. The latter portion of what is termed “a Fragment” is, I think, nervous and well finished. These lines—

“ Then ask not what so desolates the earth?

Why flows the tear? or why prevails such dearth

Of smiling happiness? The heart, once wont
To leap with joy now sees pale Misery gaunt
Approach with haggard step—affections nip—
And dash the cup of pleasure from the lip!”

and especially the last are excellent. These too—

“The widow’s pray r the orphan’s dying sigh,
Shall rise against thee in eternity” —

I also highly admire and from this, the lines to the end very properly rise to a just climax of excellence.

The opening of *Damon and Pythias* is really beautiful —

“Friendship! blest power that softenest human woes,
Soothes the sad heart, and stills its painful throes;
With weeping eyes the mournful turn to thee
And find a gentle balm in sympathy;
Joy scarce is pure unless we can impart
The glad sensations to another heart.”

The following couplet is very happy —

“The crowd in pity gaze—poor Damon sighs—
His now raised hope in silent anguish dies.”

There are more beauties than these but as I do not wish completely to fill this sheet, I need not point them out. Now for the reverse of the medal You authorise me to criticise—so I shall avail

myself of this permission, and assume at once the dictatorial tone common to the *mangling* fraternity

When the materials are so good and well arranged, it should not have been omitted to give them the last polish. The faults I have to condemn are, it is true, trivial, but a blot is more conspicuous, and is more to be regretted, in proportion to the whiteness of the paper on which it falls. A weak rhyme in a weak poem is of little consequence, and scarcely observable, but in the present instance, the slightest jar that intrudes appears most foul discord. I have, however, nothing to reproach but a little carelessness. It has been omitted to correct three or four weak rhymes—it is wrong not to have attempted to alter any part. To produce a poem and then neglect it, is a species of *infanticide*. The chief praise that can be given to Pope is, in my opinion, “the patient touches of unwearied art.” There are three species of excellencies, the first is that of genius, the second of art, the third of genius and art combined. Certainly a just thought, like a handsome woman, looks well in any dress, but still, elegant drapery lends a thousand charms to beauty. Perhaps I ought not thus boldly to dare to censure. Pope says—

"Let such teach others who themselves excel,
And censure freely who have written well."

By which rule I must be silent, but I think it not
a just one, and this of Horace's is more *à mon
gré* —

"I though I scribble in Apollo's spite
Can teach to others what is just and right
And thus a whetstone to the steel can lend
An edge itself possesses not, my friend."

(N B — The two last words are for rhyme's sake.)

However I will now particularize those lines
with which I am ill pleased and I will have even
the further boldness or rather *impudence* to offer
emendations.—

"Though with a smother d hate their breasts do glow
They have not power to strike the wish d for blow"

These lines are excellent, but the abominable little
expletive *do* ought to be avoided and this might
have been done so easily—

Though with a smother d hate their bosoms glow
They have not power to strike the wish d for blow

Singulars and plurals rhyme ill together—

"A Liberty that shines with sober light,
Instructs the people how to guard their rights."

Substitute "each right" for "their rights," and all
is right

"Whilst admiration spreads from breast to breast,
And Pythias by the crowd's with honour deck'd "

The rhyme is weak, and a moment's thought would
have avoided it. Perhaps thus—

Whilst admiration spreads from breast to breast,
And virtuous Pythias by the crowd is blest

For—

"Damon appears not—whom the people curse
As an ingrate to truth and honour lost , "

I offer the following—

No Damon comes—the people curse his name,
Ingrate to truth, and dead to generous fame

For—

"Mute sorrow now pervades the trembling crowd,
As Dionysius rose to give the word , "

this—

Sorrow aghast suspends the tight-drawn breath,
As Dionysius sternly order'd death

For—

"Oh, say not so, Damon quick made reply,
What anguish had been mine if thou hadst died ! "

this—

Oh, say not so, the generous Damon cried,
What anguish had been mine if thou hadst died !

And for—

“To think such worth exalted shall be doom’d
Scarce to be known—then hurried to the tomb;

I make a present of this—

To think of worth exalted, such the doom,
Scarce to be known—then hurried to the tomb.

It is now I think, quite time to end my hyper criticisms. The Persians have a term for this set of people— *nooktacheens* “cavillers at dots”—and I have proved myself one of these.

I send you some lines, professing to be an imitation of Phineas Fletcher “these you are welcome to hack, mangle and maul as much as you please. As I wrote them coming out here I might plead the shaking of the *palkes** in their favour but I scorn this, and gave them up to be dealt with *comme il vous plaira*.

I return the two volumes of Anderson’s Poets with many thanks. The authors of the fifth volume I have been long and intimately acquainted with those of the fourth were mostly new to me and have given me much entertainment. Fletcher’s

* *Palkunkeen*, or travelling litter

“Purple Island” is a remarkably fine poem. It is an allegory on man, giving first an *anatomical* description of him, (which might have been spared with great benefit to the poem,) and then describing the various virtues and vices that raise or degrade him. These are afterwards set by the ears, and, in the middle of the battle, an angel is introduced in the very strange shape of James the First, who turns the scale in favour of the former. Such a fulsome and undeserved compliment is certainly disgusting, but there are so many beauties in the description of the various passions, that one can forgive the poet a few faults. I do not, however, recommend your wading through twelve long allegorical cantos, but, should such be your taste any day, I shall then have saved you much trouble for I have run my pencil through those stanzas which you may skip without loss.

I send *Comàla*—which of course is of no use to me. This is what is vulgarly termed “*a west-country compliment*,” however, I must say for myself, that were it of use to me, it should not be the less readily sent. I have been all day scampering over my fields, and in delightful anticipation of future crops. I thought my ride the pleasantest in

the world, every dirty puddle appeared to my partial eyes romantic and picturesque. I exclaimed every third minute—

“Hall! happy country; rich in fertile meads!”

and then, fancying myself my indigo plant, I cried out in gratitude to the rain—

“Your vivifying presence life we call—

By you we live, and grow, and have our all;”

(which lines are excellent, though I cannot just now recall to memory from what poet I took them.) Indeed, I am very much surprised that I did not forget to look at the people sowing and in lieu of it amuse myself by parodying Swift’s City Shower” In my country one I would have introduced a thousand more agreeable objects than dead cats drowned pups, and turnip-tops. Even now an exquisite north wester is in full play and every *delicious* gust of wind gives a filip to my pen. But as the chances are that you will not have the same *gust* to read as I to write I might as well conclude—and so I will but I must first present an offering to Miss R**** in the shape of a French epigram. If it wants wit, it does not want ill-nature and is not, therefore altogether

wanting. What is very strange is, that the thought of it occurred to me the other day when in your company; but I have frequently observed, that an object not only inspires a train of ideas analogous to itself, but also very often one of a diametrically opposite nature—which accounts for my having thought of *scandal* though *you* were in the room.—

EPIGRAMME.

Veux-tu savoir comment aux belles femmes plaire?
 Ne flatte point leur beauté, leur esprit,
 Il faut l'agir bien mieux sur cette affaire,—
 Pour toute louange de chaque compagne medis

Pray have the goodness to beg of Miss R**** not to be too critical, she must recollect that it is more than three years since I left school, and so long a want of practice has naturally *dulled* my French.

A thousand pardons for all this farrago

LETTER IX.

May 1811.

I SEND back the third volume of the Gentleman's Magazine. The second volume I was most entertained with. I was tempted throughout the three to use my pencil, but the subjects were so fruitful of remarks, that had I begun I must have disfigured the books with scribbling from beginning to end so I contented myself with *pasting* into my common place book all that I thought curious. Do you not keep a book of this kind? If not you ought to do so it is both amusing and useful.

I am very glad that you coincide with me in opinion of Collins's merits. Ho Thomson, and Gray are my particular favourites. I beg Miss R****s pardon for troubling her about a riddle she does not know. I had thought I heard it from her and as my memory had proved treacherous, I wanted it refreshed for a particular purpose. The

following is *not* actually the riddle, but something like it —

I've seen a comet drop down hail,
I've seen a cloud suck up a whale,
I've seen the sea within a glass,
I've seen some cyder beat an ass,
I've seen a man full three miles high;
I've seen a mountain sob and cry,
I've seen a child with thousand eyes,
All this was seen without surprise

Of course you will solve this in a moment, so I will not affront you with assistance. You have been gay indeed—dancing in such cruelly hot weather!! Nothing, I should have thought, but the bite of a tarantula—a visit from Saint Vitus—or some other such gentle incentive, could have produced such wonders!

I am happy to hear that you are to have a chess visitor. I differ with you as to the improvement to be gained from playing with a bad player, certainly there will not be as much as from playing with a superior or equal, yet there will be some. The only danger is getting into a habit of carelessness; otherwise the teaching the game is like to reading over the rudiments of a language with which you are well acquainted—by reminding us of first

principles, it essentially improves us. Being of this opinion, I have taken every opportunity of teaching the game, and have initiated at least twenty persons into its delightful mysteries.

As to my visiting Calcapore—this will not probably be before next September! This is a horrible length of time for the jungles and I think of it with quite a nervous sickness! I however never feel *ennui* for in reading and writing I am of unconquerable patience and solace the intervals in which I am not thus occupied, by building in the air remarkably fine castles. The fairy Morgana herself does not excel me here and if one really feels happy it matters little whether we are indebted for it to fancy or reality—as I think I once said before a madman's is frequently an enviable state of life! Add to this I hope to make a large quantity of indigo and this will give me much employment—and it is only idleness that is to be dreaded. I do not know how it is that I thus sit down and pour out to you, with such confidence all the *heterogeneous heterodox stuff* that comes uppermost!

LETTER X

May 1811

I SEND the copy of verses of which I spoke I have, of course, made it a point of conscience not to alter a letter, but have faithfully copied it from the tattered scraps I found. In searching for it I found that I was wrong in calling these my first verses—though certainly they are the first that deserve the name. I met with an old lot of twenty-three attempts before this, and I dare say there were more, but I have forgotten them all. Only one copy is among my papers—this contains about a hundred lines to one Chloe, who was the first enslaver of my youthful heart—for, like Sterne, I have made it a rule to be always in love with some princess or other. I will try to decypher these, and will send you a copy. I wish I could recall some of the others, for they were so finely nonsensical that they must have amused you.

Those on Nelson are not quite so bad as I expected indeed if I may be allowed to speak of myself as I would of others some of the lines are pretty good and so little have I improved in the art, that I feel conscious I could not now write better than many of them. There are it is true, many horrible passages. What can be worse than the stupid truism I have made Nelson utter—"they can't be conquer'd who will never yield!" This is almost as demonstratively true as the famous lines, the English fleet you cannot see—because they're not in sight! Sending Mars flying out of a port-hole is also very bad, though I recollect I admired it very much myself at the time of writing.

I assure you no bard ever received such praises for the sublimest of his effusions as I did for these lines—my poor dear mamma was in raptures with every line—my sisters almost wore out their fingers in copying—and happy was the visitor who heard them recited less than three times. My greatest triumph was when my mother read them to our old Irish cook—she melted into tears at that exquisitely pathetic stroke—Alas! brave Nelson!—and I felt myself as great a hero as Obadiah with his scullion. However in spite of the pleasure it gave

my mother, I did somewhat repent having shown it to her, for some of my schoolfellows carried the story to school, and I was there most woefully quizzed about Mrs O'Brien the cook I had made, too, some terrible mistakes, for instance, one couplet stood originally thus,—

“And now the grappling irons hold them firm,
Now *keel* opposes *keel*, and yard-arm, arm—”

so little was I then acquainted with nautical matters—thus my mother corrected One of my schoolfellows got hold of a copy, made a few very *neat* alterations, and gave me credit for them, thus, one line he changed to

“The path which he has trod, *may you tread too*”

In another place he scratched out three or four of mine, and inserted—

“There, as great Nelson stood upon the deck,
A bullet comes and hits him on the neck”

In another he made me a present of—

“Blood, flesh, and bones, all o'er the planks are spread—
Here lies an arm, and there a leg, or head”

In another, he facetiously improved upon me with—

“From many a port-hole now *bangs off* dread Mars,
Spreading destruction 'mongst the jolly tars”

Again he corrected me with—

“ But soon this fleet *Lord Nelson* quick did *spring*
And at the French came eager to let fly ! ”

In another part—

“ *Lord Nelson* spoke—My lads, I ask of you
That you your duty well to-day do do.”

Again—

“ O tragic dame, *Moll Pomony* I ask
Your tragic aid for this my tragic task.”

And after cutting me up in this manner throughout the whole of it, he concludes with—

“ Who can refuse the tribute of their praise
Painters their canvases, or the Muses her lays—
Or to reward them Masters, holidays ? ”

I forgot all his other corrections. Another I recollect was this—

“ For how can they who *volens-volens* fight,
Dy Boney forced, who says that *might is right*
Oppose those tars, who, like the sons of Greece
Fight for their bread, their butter and their cheese ?
Whilst such brave fellows *all their things* to save
Cold, hunger thirst, and a sea-sickness brave ” &c

You may conceive how I who was immediately dubbed *the poet* ” got roasted for all this how over I played my friend a trick in kind though I

now forget the verses, and turned the tables upon him Excuse me this nonsense. I send the "Armenian" I was serious about the "Mofussil Magazine"

I *remembered* to look yesterday for the comet, and saw him immediately and distinctly It is a little to the southward of the equator, that is, in about a WSW direction, and has a hazy confused appearance, somewhat resembling Pleiades, only more dim. There is a *large* star near him.

LETTER XI.

June 1811

As for the enquiry you make after my other early attempts I have had a long search for them but only two can I find—the first Compliments to Chloe written when, I know not, but I suspect in 1802 One thing I perfectly recollect I quote in it a Greek orator Lysias whom I then knew only by name The sentiment I gave as his, I had picked up from a schoolfellow and though never detected, I found, when I came to read his works myself that nothing could be more gross than the misrepresentation I had made of the orator's observation so far from saying what I put into his mouth, he speaks of a wicked man, and observes, "there may be a difficulty in beginning to praise him, but there is none in ceasing to do so" As a punishment for this pedantic vanity of mine I found myself well punished when I came to the orator's speeches. His works contain as tough

Greek as I ever wish to encounter ; and, as if there had been a fatality attending him, I had once to get by heart, as a punishment for *going out of bounds*, the full half of one of these crabbed orations I have detested Lysias ever since

The other is a trifle , which I only send as finding it written in my mother's hand, return it to me, for I would not lose one scrap of hers on any account—but enough of my stupid verses

Did you read the “ Ode on Mrs Killgrew ? ” Recollect that when I called it “ the finest piece of poetry in the English language,” I gave these as Dr Johnson's words—it is very far from being my opinion—or, I think, any one's else

“ Alexander's Feast ” holds the first place with me , and even Pope's “ Ode to St Cecilia,” or any of Gray's or Collins's, is superior, I think, to this favourite of Johnson's How Johnson could so extol it, I am really surprised There are certainly some exquisite passages in it, but there are also as many horrible faults What can be worse than “ made in the *last promotion* of the blessed , ” and something (which I forget now) about a *chamber* of words or *appurtenances*

Do you recollect my telling you that some species

of wood were much better conductors of sound than others? I have since been hunting through my books for an account of this, and I yesterday found it in a paper on the construction of an *Æolian* harp. It there says that the wood of the *Linden* tree is the most susceptible of vibration and that the sounding-boards of pianofortes are accordingly made of it of course there must be plenty of this wood in Calcutta.* I know too that the sounding boards of pulpits are made of a particular kind of wood, but what this is I cannot inform you.

I was determined to recover for you if possible our obstinate puzzle. It has given my brains a great deal of employment this morning but I have at length succeeded. The proportions that the oblong bears to the square are that it is one-fifth longer and one-sixth narrower which make the superficies of each exactly equal. With these I can effect what is required, and send you *musters* to try your skill upon. I hope you have discovered the weights!

* The lady to whom this was written, being deaf had wished to ascertain what kinds of wood answered best as conductors of sound, having found a small rod, placed one end against the piano and the other to the teeth, an excellent medium for bearing instrumental music.

LETTER XII

June 1811

I HAVE the pleasure to send "Clarissa Harlowe" The eight volumes of this, after the tedious "Sir Charles," will be nothing to you

Recollect that I am to have very *full* remarks on each article of the "Mofussil Magazine" For this purpose, I have requested my father, as soon as it shall have completely run the gauntlet of Moorshe-dabad, to send it back to you. and you will, I hope and beg, bestow on it a little serious attention, and tell me what are the faults which yourself and others have discovered in each paper Praises I enter my protest against, but for *criticisms* I shall be very much obliged, and by these I will try to profit in my future essays

To discover these faults it will not be requisite to bring much of your ingenuity into play, many, however, I doubt not, will escape you One, for

example, you may take as a puzzle in the anecdote of chess, I have made a gross blunder, it is not in the situation or in the playing but in the remarks which precede as connected with the playing—find this out if you can—and you *can* if you *will* always. I did not perceive my blunder till it was all written, and then, rather than scratch out or blot, I let it remain, as the chances are against detection. This is certainly a wrong mode of proceeding but in such trifles it does not signify

I must trouble you with a few remarks pour servir à l'histoire of the several pieces. The Notice to Correspondents was necessary to keep myself out of scrapes for I shall be obliged sometimes to reject what is offered, and as I shall most probably know the authors I can in private state to them my reasons why but if I presume to be publicly witty on their productions the most mild will at least retaliate and others may be *mugre*. I must steer clear if I can, of giving offence. My Preface I do not like—it is too *pert*—but I was rather pressed for time when I wrote it. You, too have seen parts of it before—but I do not believe stealing from one's self comes under the head of *plagiarism*

The article on Divination, I inserted because you expressed once a curiosity on the subject, indeed, *your* amusement and approbation was so paramountly my object in starting the undertaking, that had I been able to show precedent for *dedicating* a *magazine*, I would have precluded this with an epistle in the quaint old style, “To the ryghte noble and excellaunte Ladie, the Dame &c. &c. &c. —my singular gude Ladie, and Mystresse Pat ion” —“By her Honor’s seruaunt humble atte commandant” But this would have been against all rule

The essay on Characteristic Partialities is rather too long-winded, but, as a French writer observes, “I had not time to make it *shorter*” As it was, I omitted much that I might have inserted, for instance, a gentleman who was so attached to dramatic performances, attended them so regularly, and had his ideas so confined to them, that in the year 1768 he published a work, (his only one,) the title of which I now copy for you from an old review of that year—“The Dramatic Time-piece, or Perpetual Monitor, being a calculation of the length of time every act takes in the performance, in all the acting plays of the Theatres-royal of Drury-Lane, Covent-Garden, and Haymarket,

as minuted from repeated observations during the course of many years practice

This gentleman must have been much edified by his singular manner of observing a play as much perhaps as Jodidiah Buxton, who when asked what he thought of Garrick's acting, had only to observe that he spake 3476½ words in the course of the night or as the critic in Sterne who when the question was put to him, And how did Garrick speak the speech last night? very sagaciously answered,

He spake it, an please your lordship exactly in four minutes and fifteen seconds by my stop-watch!

I might also have mentioned a dancing-master who calls the country-dance "one of the most refined and elegant of all amusements" My friend Mr W***** would also have furnished me with a good paragraph. When he was last here we were talking—as we generally did—on the beauties of the several poets he observed, that the finest and truest passage he had ever met with was the following one from Congreve—

"How rev'rend is the face of this tall pile
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads
To bear aloft its arch'd and pond'rous roof—
By its own weight made steadfast and immovable"

This is certainly excellent and the whole speech

(which is in the tomb scene in the "Mourning Bride") is very fine—but I made him confess that love of architecture had stepped in to the aid of love of poetry, however, I differ with Foote, and do not think a well-rounded period, or an *à-propos* illustration, is worth offending a friend or even an acquaintance for. Perhaps I ought to have omitted the account of Prince Bathiani, as some people may say I need not have criminated myself, but this is slander—"let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung." The original of the Italian verses you may find, if you please, in the supplement to Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir William Jones, they begin,—"*Già roseggiono intorno all' orizzonte*" The Persian Invocation to Death, which you so justly admire, first made its appearance in the "Calcutta Gazette," in January 1809. It was written by Molovee Room, and a person under the signature of Khosha Cheen invited the literary world to send him translations of it; at the same time giving his opinion, that it might compare in beauty with the most celebrated passages of classic antiquity. In consequence, a crowd of translations poured in, I will give you those only that appeared in one paper. H*****'s, however, far excels

them all and has never been published. Dr Leyden, under the signature of Marsyas, also gave a translation of it in the 'Mirror' This, without doubt, is excellent but I cannot lay my hands on it, and my memory is treacherous.

The anecdote of the Catamaran is, I hope, new to you at all events it has never been published. The other, about Shah Allum is strictly true as to matter of fact. It happened to Mr ***** a very short time ago the dressing it up was an attempt at the *pompous* for such, I hear is Mr *****'s style but as I never saw him, of course I cannot be expected to have caught his manner

I will hunt for Dr Leyden's translation, but I would wager any sum Captain H*****'s is better. The general complaint against *Magazines* is, that the first number is good but that the following ones fall off. Admire my ingenuity in avoiding this anti-climax. I have written almost all the first *myself* and by this means the second when I shall admit the most of other people's, must excel it. I am sure you will get me as many correspondents as you can. The son of Charlotte Smith is, you say a poet and by birth he must be a good one. D*** must ask him to open his strong-box

LETTER XIII

June 1811

I DON'T know how I came to talk about *asymptotes* I referred you to the "Encyclopædia," forgetting that it is impossible to understand the definitions there given without a very tolerable knowledge of mathematics (If, however, you run your eye over it, you will, I believe, see a curious *bull* Dr Wallis, speaking of one of these figures, says, "*it is more than infinite*" I need not add, that mathematics have no more right to speak nonsense than any other science) But though you will not be able to understand its theory, I will give you a familiar example, which, in my opinion, illustrates it, though I have never seen or heard it thus adduced—

~ If a man walks one thousand feet in one minute, five hundred in the second, two hundred and fifty in the third, and so on, walking half as much in

each succeeding minute if he should walk *for ever* he will never get through two thousand feet!!!

This is strange but true you may at once prove it by simple addition. I cannot trace out the analogy for you but this is an *asymptote* the man always gets nearer the goal, but never can reach it though he walk for ever!

I have sent the lines to the "Mirror" The only thing I am offended at is, that the editor should have intended to give me as a neighbour that very stupid fellow one *Argus*.

I think I told you that my *nickname* at school was *Ackeeo* (from a song in Paul and Virginia, which happened to please me then, and which I was continually *murdering*) I have therefore assumed it as my *nom-de-guerre* in the Mirror One signature is as good as another and should any old schoolfellow chanco to see *Ackeeo* he would not fail to recognise me so that I may be indebted to it, one of these days, for a pleasant renewal of some old acquaintance.

LETTER XIV

July 1811

I WILL have the papers you wished for copied but I cannot offer you the originals—and I am sure you will excuse me when I tell you why. I never write any thing in the shape of verses, &c., that I do not make a point to send home to my mother; and as she is the only person that sets a value even on my *handwriting*, how can I but try to gratify, to the extent of my power, a mother so affectionate! You will not believe me—and yet it is the truth—I never send a piece to the “Mirror” but with the ultimate object of giving her the pleasure of seeing an effusion of mine in print—*à-propos* of which, the translation in the last “Mirror” made its appearance very unseasonably. The fact is, I sent this to Mr B in February last, but repenting of it, as thinking it not a proper subject for a paper, I wrote to him by the following *dák* to tear it up. In his answer, he requested to be allowed to insert it in

his paper when there was a dearth of news this is so long ago that I had hoped it was forgotten, and consequently gave it a place in my Magazine.* It vexes me much. Not many I hope, will observe the double publication but those who do will think I set a greater value than it deserves on such a trifle. You at least must acquit me of this vanity

I am glad you coincide in opinion with me as to the *Preface* indeed, had you liked it I should have set you down as wanting *taste*. It has the appearance, as you observe of being *laboured*—and it is also *perit* I wrote it not *con amore* but as a task I was obliged to get through, and so eked it out with forced passages that disgusted myself

I may speak of myself if with impartiality as of others therefore I have the pleasure to say I agree with you in thinking *Characteristical Partialities* the best—though by no means good The language in the beginning is by much too inflated for instance, the *intellectual* visions of the soul this if I am not mistaken, too is a *bull* or at least what rhetoricians term a *pleonasm* and resembles such passages as the *vital spark of life*.

* A MS. periodical ; some papers from which were published under the title of "Indian Reminiscences."

My Magazine will, I fear, disappoint you and I more than half repent my rashness. You say you will be able to discover which are my writings: the reason is, that they all do most horribly smell of the *cask*—I cannot for the life of me help introducing such a crowd of musty quotations. But before you censure this you must learn Latin: and if you can prevent your thoughts from for ever turning to the exquisite beauties that are to be met with in it, I will never quote again.

By the by, why not learn Latin? Ladies learn Italian and French, and where, in any author of these nations, are there to be found such delightful, such melodious passages as in Virgil? He is the very king of poets! (even Homer he has subjugated) If you would only borrow a grammar and dictionary of me, you would in a month be perfectly of my opinion. But I have mounted my *hobby-horse*, and am cantering away furiously enough—this is so much *mine*, that I taught my *sisters* Latin, I assure you. One of them attained a considerable proficiency, and it is now, she writes me, her favourite study. Another, though she did not *take to it* quite so *kindly*, yet manages to quote, in a letter to my father, no less a personage than

Seneca. The third I could make nothing of—singing “Miss Bailey” in Latin was the extent of her learning. All this is too bad.

I am sorry I have not Johnson’s *Rasselas*—this is a favourite book of mine. Its morality though a little gloomy is excellent and its language in spite of all the abuse that has been thrown on high sounding sentences and frequent antithesis I admire much. The opening of the work gives a most finished specimen of a *rounded* period—there is not one *more smooth* or sonorous.

I am much obliged to you for your news. I am sorry Captain H***** is going away as I like him much. Captain C***** who is coming if you do not already know him, I think you must like. He is the perfect gentleman—of most mild and amiable character polished manner no small share of sense and learning, and universally liked.

LETTER XV

July 1811

I THANK you very much for Mr T's and P's remarks T's criticism on the lines to my mother,* is to me the highest praise I am glad to think my lines contain the fervour of a *lover*, this fervour I felt, though I did not flatter myself I had expressed it I entirely disagree with him when he says any species of *love* can be so warm as parental, but I cannot better express to you my thoughts, and I may add, my *feelings*, on this subject, than by quoting Hannah More—(“Cœlebs,” vol 1 p 17) “I am persuaded that there is no affection of the human heart more exquisitely pure than that which is felt by a grateful son towards a mother who fostered his infancy with fondness, watched over his childhood with anxiety, and his youth with an interest compounded of all that is tender, wise, and

* The lines alluded to were published in the “Indian Reminiscences,” under the title of “Moonlight Thoughts”

pious. And what terms are sufficiently glowing to express gratitude with for such affection !

I return Mrs Grant's poems. I like them very much in parts but not entirely. Of the Highlanders I admire most the description of the shealings and all that relates to the wandering Prince. The Occasional Poems are I think, both good and indifferent.

By the way there is a poem not to be found in this book, which certainly appeared in the first edition it was entitled Journey from Glasgow to Laggan. Mrs Grant speaks of it in a letter to Miss O—— and again mentions it in her poetic list for Lady C——

" And first the playful varied lay
I sang to cheat the lonely way
(While frozen winter chill'd my fancy)
Though chiefly meant to please my Nancy "

I like Monduth very much the episode of Monfolt is beautiful and I also highly admire Mrs Grant for her admirable statement of the Ossian controversy it is indeed, extremely forcible and well written I think. Indeed how can I think otherwise when she has been so sensible as to fall in precisely with my own wise opinions?

Will you oblige me by lending me now “Schiller’s Plays?” I am, you see, going to trouble you for your whole library by degrees

I shall go away on Monday morning, and hope on my return to find you will have derived benefit from the trial. Pray do not despair, let your mind assist the mercury,* for many ascribe great effects to this aid. I am sorry it will so much confine you, but *we* must take courage—I say *we*, for it will be much less *your* privation than *ours*, but it is also for *our* benefit too. So wishing you every success, I remain, &c

* Which had been recommended for her deafness

LETTER XVI.

July 1811.

I PERFECTLY agree with you in your opinion of *Clarissa*," and of the want of taste and judgment of those who would have had Richardson make a more cheerful *dénouement* in my opinion it is not sufficiently melancholy *Clarissa's* death is admirably drawn and there not one stroke of improvement could have been added but *Lovelace's* is, you observe extremely faulty —the making him fall in a duel is by no means distributing poetic justice. It seriously too affects the moral of the work for Richardson should not imply as he does that the vices of *Lovelace* are to be avoided because they bring down the retribution of offended friends. He ought rather to have dwelt only on the punishment that they bring to themselves and in painting the guilty horrors of reproaching conscience and the terrors of approaching the tribunal of an

offended Deity, he would have given a far more beautiful, more interesting, and more morally impressive portrait than he has

There are two conclusions, that, had he adopted either, I should have admired. In the one, Lovelace might have been torn with a thousand contending emotions, between repentance for his crime, and libertinism trying to make him palliate it; a fever, delirium, or other circumstances, might come to the aid of the former, and bring on a sincere and impressive reformation, the letters written in which state of mind would have been deeply interesting. In the other, Lovelace might strive to conquer his accusing conscience, and to dissipate it by travel and gaiety, but his efforts should all be fruitless—every thing should serve but to recall his offences—and he should at length be worked up into such a paroxysm of acute suffering by the goadings of his memory, that he should, in a fit of horrible despair, curse himself, and put a period to his existence

Either of these would have been made, by Richardson's pen, moral and interesting, but at present there is much to censure. Lovelace, had he not been called to an account by Colonel Morden, would, I think it is fair from his letters to conclude, have

conquered his grief and *slight twinges* of repentance And even his death is by no means interesting He certainly *repents* but *not sufficiently* and his one day's suffering can hardly be called what he terms it—*expiation*

By the by I dislike the character of Lovelace very much. It serves, I think to do much more harm than good. A man so profligate should not have been drawn in such otherwise fascinating colours and above all committing the crimes he does he should not be made, at the same moment to express his thorough belief of the existence of a Providence. This belief and those crimes, are incompatible Of what use is conviction of the existence of a Deity if it can possess the mind *in common* with the greatest depravity? This is impossible—guilt and scepticism must be inseparable for is it to be conceived that a man can deliberately do that which he is convinced must consign him to everlasting perdition? Excuse all this my pen generally runs away with me—poor judgment lags after with a very slow pace.

The next number of the Magazine shall be with you in a few days The following is the bill of fare—from this you may if you can, guess at the

nature of the dishes, but make due allowance for the inexperience of the *cook* —

- “ On Anagrams ”
 - “ Journal from Mangalore to Seringapatam ’
 - “ On the Eloquence of Silence ”
 - “ Casting of Buonaparte’s Nativity ”
 - “ Curious Error of Dr Ashe’s ”
 - “ Reply to the Criticism on Thomson ”
 - “ Ode of Hafiz, with translation ”
 - “ To Suspense ”
 - “ To the Memory of an Infant ”
 - “ Sonnet of Scarron’s, translated ”
 - “ *The Promised Reward* ”
 - “ To a Lady singing ”
 - “ Two Songs from Rungpore ”
 - “ A Middle Orme ”
 - “ Epigramme ”
 - “ Verses by Garrick on Miss Wilton ”
- (Never before published)

Perhaps something more, if necessary to fill up the sheet I will write more in two or three days

LETTER XVII

June 1811

I HAVE finished and sent in to my father the second Number of the Mofussil Magazine. I need not point out to you the authors of any other pieces than that To the Memory of an Infant and Reply to the Criticism both Captain H*****s and the "Two Songs from Rung pore" both Mr Manning s.* Of the authors of the others you are not ignorant.

I forgot to mention, what is indeed sufficiently evident of itself that the Journal from Mangalore to Seringapatam is also Captain H*****s.

I will give you a few observations that occur to me on the contents of this Number In the Letter on Anagrams I have made a terrible mistake In one of my quotations I speak of thoughts that burn.

* The Chinese tra-eller mentioned in Charles Lamb's Letters.

and words that glow." Having scarcely any books of poetry here, I am obliged generally to trust to memory, and here it has proved woefully treacherous. I just now recollect that I have murdered this very beautiful line: it occurs, I think, in Gray's "Progress of Poetry," and ought to be, if I am not again wrong, "thoughts that *breathe*, and words that *burn*" There is a wide difference. Pray have the goodness to examine the original, and make the necessary correction with your penknife. My brains must have been sadly conglomerated when I made so stupid and flat a mis-quotation.

— In this paper I am rather ashamed of myself for having the vanity to litch in my two anagrams among so many other good ones, however, at this vanity you must only smile.

Captain H*****'s Journal will be concluded in the next with a pretty piece of poetry. The paper "On Silence" I do very much repent of. I wish I had loved my subject a little more, and studied more its practice than theory. It is very much too long, and will, I fear, be thought dry. } the fact is, when I began to write it I intended to confine myself to *five* pages, and had in my *foul copy* only this quantity, but the subject grew upon

me as I wrote and I could not withstand the temptation of inserting the examples of it that recurred to my memory I was led away almost without being aware of the length into which I had strayed. However this shall be the last time of my thus offending in future I will not commence upon a subject of this nature and two sheets shall henceforward be the extreme limits allowed to any paper of *my own*.

When you come to my translation from Virgil you must not move Dryden from the shelf—such comparing is by no means fair To try the goodness of a candle's light, it must not be held in the sunshine.

Buonaparte's Nativity Cast, is somewhat curious whence I got it I do not now remember but I found an extract of it among my paper rubbish—most probably from some periodical work.

Captain H*****'s reply to my criticism in the last has not in the least made me alter my opinion. I do not, indeed think his arguments touch upon, much less affect the question in agitation. He merely expresses an admiration of the general beauties of the episode and this I feel equally I hope with himself but it was not Thomson person

ally, or the episode generally, that I was so presumptuous as to attack, but merely the grammatical construction of one sentence, and of this I confess I spoke somewhat confidently, as not thinking there could be two opinions on the subject: but this decided tone was certainly very wrong. I only quoted the part I objected to, for what precedes or follows is irrelevant to the subject.

Thomson meant to say, undoubtedly, "he saw her charming—but he saw not half her charms, for as many more were concealed by her modesty." But in expressing this more tersely he has obscured the sense, and in saying, "he saw not *half* those charms she *concealed*," he has in my opinion committed a solecism,—for the inference is plain from this, that "he did see a *part* of what was *concealed*," which is certainly a *bull*. But what of this? so trivial an error cannot be said to detract from the beauty of Thomson's poetry.

I ought, according to custom, to insert a rejoinder in the next Number, but this I am unwilling to do, not that I am afraid, but that I should seem to stand on a bad ground. Captain H***** declares that he has undertaken the defence of the passage from a love of the poet, and I could not

therefore renew my attack on it without seeming to be actuated by dislike to him—a supposition I would not have entertained on any account. As to any pretensions to critical acumen I care very little about giving up them but I do care very much about being supposed to be so utterly wanting in taste as not thoroughly to feel and enjoy Thomson's exquisite beauties. I have still, thank Heaven the mind to taste the nerve to feel!" as Anna Matilda says and I will not let this be doubted by renewing an attack even against a word of this poet's. I like Captain H***** for defending so admirable a writer and I do wish very much he could convince me that I am wrong as I have written to him.

The quotations he makes from the episode are very beautiful but still, I think, *impartially* that they do not contain any argument on the subject. I shall be glad to hear you differ from me. Pray let me have your opinion, for I wish much to change mine.

The Ode from Hafiz is the far-famed *taza bu taza nou bu nou*. I have been obliged you will perceive to have recourse to my portfolio for my brain has produced nothing for the last two months

Indeed, the muse never visited me but as I sate deeply cogitating over "the midnight oil," and now I am obliged to go to bed early (which I detest) that I may be up before daylight to make indigo all the morning, which completely unfits me for the rest of the day for thinking, reading, or writing, so that the muse has flown away in disgust, and I shall not even *attempt* to recall her before October next, when I hope a few smiles at Cossimbazar will lure the young lady back

I must have tired you with so much scribbling Pray have the goodness to favour me with the observations that may occur to you, and in spite of my motto, do not spare criticisms, I am certain they will be liberal and judicious, and I shall therefore be very much obliged to you for them, and will try to profit by your remarks

Last month you were very sparing in this article, which was bad You are the only person who will condescend to *review* the work, and ought not therefore to disappoint me Indulgence I have certainly a right to expect from others, but from you I beg only for *justice*, and this, if you please, with some severity—for it is necessary I should somewhere have a curb, or I know not where my pre-

sumption might lead me Excuse this scrawl, and attribute the trouble I give you, not to *me*, but to *your own good-nature*. I must have no slight opinion of this when I venture to *tax* it so much. Pray let me have not only your own observations on the Magazine but also any that you may hear from others.

LETTER XVIII

July 1811.

I AM very much obliged to you for your endeavours to enroll Mr P***** among the contributors to the Magazine I expect very much from him The difficulty he expresses of satisfying himself, will ensure pleasure to his readers He who is easily satisfied will never excel I shall be very glad to receive his aid; for, to fill my ten sheets, I am now obliged to scribble much more, and with less consideration, than I ought

I am very much gratified by that part of your letter which relates to my father I was somewhat afraid that he might not like my wasting my time to expose myself by scribbling nonsense However, the time I give up to it is not taken from any better employment I am hard at work at my indigo from early morning to sunset, and only the evenings are for recreating myself in writing letters, and compos-

ing jejune essays. I will spare no efforts to prevail on my father to contribute. I have already frequently made the request, and will continue to do so until I succeed—of which I have strong hopes. He has a great fund of anecdote which he can, if he please, dispense in a very happy manner and it is on this I hope to draw. He is not now in the habit of composing, but when young did so with much success. I have by accident seen horticultural and various other papers of his remarkably well written but I am afraid I shall not persuade him to renew *original* efforts. He has, too, had his poetical draughts but these he keeps inviolably secret and will, I much fear not be prevailed again to sip of the Pierian stream. I shall certainly make every effort

My father misunderstood me when he said M**** had *promised* me any thing. He has promised the Rungpore Club a song and this M***** has promised to forward to me

I am sorry I have not Hume's Essays or would immediately send them. You trust their perusal will do you no harm and I am ready to answer for it they will not. Hume has attempted to conceal the snake beneath the fairest flowers

but his sophistry, though veiled in the most consummate eloquence, will not escape your penetration. And though his propositions are advanced with all the elegance of language, and his arguments have the most specious semblance of truth, yet your judgment, I am sure, will not be misled. You will detect the fallacy of his premises, and perceive the abyss—the horribly impious conclusions which would necessarily be deduced from such premises, were the truth of them admitted. These conclusions, it is true, are not drawn in the writings of these sceptical philosophers—and herein—
—is their grand art, they are too wary to advance what the *unprepared* mind would revolt at, they know that “*no one is impious but by degrees,*” they, therefore, with great ingenuity, bring forward specious arguments, which are so much *dashed* with truth, as to be implicitly believed by many, and there they leave their readers, who, if they are convinced by what they have perused, are obliged to form such conclusions as fix them, in the end, in confirmed atheism, (if atheism be possible) And this having been apparently the work of their own minds, has a stronger hold, than had the same deductions been pointed out to them by others

When you do read Hume's Essays read after them, if you can procure it, Dr Beattie's admired Essay on Truth. It is the most masterly and complete refutation of the sophistry of Hume and others that was ever penned, and, at the same time, it is more elegantly and eloquently written than the works to which it is a reply and thus is saying very much for it.

I have it not now but when I read it, and that is some years since I was never so delighted with any work in my life. I have it still strongly impressed on my memory and I should like much to re-peruse it. After refuting most completely the error he breaks out into a most eloquent and justly indignant strain at the cruel tendency of their doctrines. I cannot recollect the words, but I remember well the spirit of them is this — But let us turn to the fruits of this doctrine let us see what it hath given, what taken from us. Picture to yourself a heart most tenderly alive to every sensation imagine it suffering under incurable anguish—pierced with disappointments sharpest stings—racked with disease—pinning under the oppressor's unfeeling scourge—chilled with poverty—unsolaced by friends—in solitary misery

—nothing but a firm trust in Providence, and the certain hope of a day of retribution, can save it from the keenest agonies of despair. Yet, with this hope, it sustains itself against the accumulated evils, and smiles on its sufferings.

And do these base miscreants with sacrilegious hands dare to snatch from them this the last resort, the last refuge of the miserable? Would they inhumanly rob them of the only comfort that still cheers their existence, and which has survived the utmost ravages of malice, misfortune, and tyranny! Say, did the pure tenets of Christianity ever destroy the peace of virtuous retirement, has it disturbed the tranquillity of innocence, deepened the gloom of sorrow, added one pang to the bed of the dying, or aggravated the horrors of the grave? No! ye traitors to human kind—never!

Ye murderers of the human soul, how can you answer it to your hearts, that you have destroyed the only solace of the distressed, and what have you given them in its room? Nought of comfort on this side the grave—and beyond, only—despair!

If the consideration of this awaken not in you the keenest pangs of remorse, then is every generous feeling in you extinguished, and the most

diabolical sentiments have usurped their room
Look, demons! on the misery you have caused,
and satiate your infernal joy in exulting over the
irremediable sufferings and dreadful despair of your
victims!

I have not done justice to the eloquent and im-
pressive author but when you read the work I
am certain you will join with me in admiration of
his animated and soothing strain.

Hume's principal attack is on the *miracles*
recorded in Scripture and by insisting on the
impossibility of a revolution in nature he leads
us to believe that nature, or *matter* is self-acting
and cannot receive any foreign impulse which, of
course is equal to a denial of the existence of the
Deity But to me, I confess, his arguments appear
childish for allowing that chance not Providence
rules every thing then is not a revolution equally
or indeed more probable than that beautiful order
of nature, which is in itself demonstrative of a
Supreme Ruler! And if a Deity do preside then
to say that to *stop* is more difficult for him than to
continue any motion is certainly the very height
of absurdity and not till this absurdity be done
away or until it be proved that the regular course

of nature is less miraculous than its aberration, will I subscribe to these doctrines

But I have—*selon mon ordinaire*—been prosing away at a tremendous rate You will perhaps be surprised to hear me broach such orthodox opinions After burlesquing Isaiah,* I ought not to quarrel with Hume—but the fact is, I am religiously given at times, and a little fastidious in my belief, in spite of Mr —, the Chief Secretary At all events I am safe with you, for a female unbeliever is a kind of monster that nothing should make me believe could exist Milton's Sin, being represented as a woman, is not half horrible enough. But of other matter I know nothing of M***** or M*****'s coming down, and S*** you must not always rely on—he is apt to be poetical That Campo† will come, cannot be expected, though, could you get him into your house, it would add a few years to his life

I send you the little thing I yesterday showed

* He refers to a parody of Virgil's "Pollio," the object of which was misapprehended by a friend The above verses were published in the volume of "Indian Reminiscences"

† Abbreviation of the name of an old friend of above eighty years of age

you. The quotations I may as well translate for you they are— If you have known any thing better than these fairly impart it.”—(Horace.)

Every thing unknown passes for sublime. — (Proverb.) I have no great opinion of this trifle which is proved by my not having shown it you before I send you a more respectable piece as a companion to it. It is a translation of an ode written by Gray in the Alps.* The original is beautiful and it is a very great pity he never gave a version of it himself. I hope you will like this, for it pleases my own fancy (I have used the Latin word *citrum* in preference to *citron* wood ” as more poetical.)

* Published in “ Indian Reminiscences.”

LETTER XIX

July 1811

WHAT you say of ———, reminds me of an anecdote of a young officer, who observed of the Duke of Marlborough, after the battle of Blenheim, that he was *a very pretty man* “And are you not *a pretty fool* for giving him such an epithet?” said an old general who heard this Pray remember me to Mr H*****, I am happy to hear that he is pleased with the paper on Silence The songs from Rungpore I think, with D***, good, and I am obliged to him for liking the paper on Anagrams I thank you for telling me that, in your “Ashe’s Dictionary,” the mistake about “curmudgeon”* does not occur, but this only proves that the Doctor discovered the blunder, and silently rectified it in the subsequent editions In the first, this

* Remarks on the mistake alluded to, formed a paper in the ‘Indian Reminiscences’

mistake certainly occurred. I am sure of my fact and indeed the omission of "Unknown Correspondent" proves the correction made by Dr Ashe.

By the by this authority which Dr Johnson gives as anonymous, he received from the Gentleman's Magazine. He was you know a constant writer in it, and when the etymology of any word puzzled him, he frequently asked for assistance in this Magazine, in the form of a query and it was in reply to one of these that somebody—most probably Dr Pegge—favoured him with this. In your

"Selections from the Gentleman's Magazine" you will find this etymology given, but there is no account there of Dr Ashe's blunder this I discovered in the manner I have related two or three years ago. I am obliged to you for your exertions in my favour and if you can persuade Mr P***** to lend me his aid you will have achieved much for me he must have plenty of spare time—there is nobody without it. You say I ought to exert my interest more in Berhampore it is impossible to do so I have written to every one I could there — did not escape me, though I do not expect any thing from him. He is a very pleasant excellently-tempered young man but I do not suspect

him of ever having been guilty of an attempt at composition, he reads everlastingly, but chiefly, if not wholly, novels, and the extent of his *attic-pleasantries*, is the now and then *committing* a good *pun*. I know he will not *write* for me, though he is so good-natured, he would, I think, do any thing else

I do not intend to lose my hold of Captain H***** when he leaves this, indeed, I expect further aid, from his promising to exert himself in procuring contributions from Dinapore I have several *promises*, but fulfilment is slow A few favours I have received from unknown friends, but, alas! I have been obliged to assume my editorial prerogative of putting a *veto* on them This is rather an unpleasant part of my office, and requires no small ingenuity to steer between giving offence, and keeping my Magazine in proper tone However, you may rest assured, that when I do *reject*, it is because it is absolutely necessary,—not a particle of merit shall escape me

Unless I get a little more assistance my bark will run aground very soon, as it is, I know not with what to fill my next Number I set out so hastily and improvidently, that I have not the least pro-

vision in store and my brain will shortly, I fear *protest my drafts*. Indeed, I have now little time to spare for indigo occupies a large portion of my time and translating papers about abominable smuggled goods, takes up much of the remainder*. A little I give to the pleasure of correspondence and eating drinking and sleep seize on the rest. However I will not despair but fight it out stoutly to the last.

Excuse this long rigmarole—but I always write all, and exactly what I think to you.

I have received the books &c. and thank you for them. Captain P****'s words certainly imply himself to be the author his at present too promises to send you the remainder at a future time. I shall like to see them much for I expect good from him from your liking what you have seen of him. From the four lines he did send, of course no judgment could be formed any more than judging of a house by a couple of bricks but I liked them and anticipate a very good poem from his translation.

* His father was collector of customs at Moorshedabad, a high and lucrative situation in the civil service of the Honourable East India Company

I congratulate you on your Europe letters. I am sorry to say I have yet received none

The present rain appears extensive, but I am twenty miles off. It will do me much good if I have a share in it. I forgot to tell you that I discovered Mrs F***'s trick last night. I take credit, as I did it on *principle*—by calculation.

I give myself much credit for having formed of Mr — precisely that opinion you have expressed—that is, that he is possessed of very considerable abilities, with a very considerable consciousness of them. I am sure I should like him much were I acquainted with him, a little vanity or eccentricity serves to heighten the pleasure of intercourse, and adds amusement to instruction. I did perceive a little of the *irresistibility* you mention, peeping out, and though I did not see you smile, can well conceive you did so inwardly. I am very much obliged to you for having lent him the Magazine. I have given you a very great deal of trouble about this, and am really ashamed of myself for it, although your good-nature chooses to say there has been none.

I had only an opportunity of saying half-a-dozen words to Mr P*****, as he was stepping into his

buggy to express my hope that I should shortly hear from him and to this he called out as he was driving away All in good time. So that I expect very soon to be favoured with a letter from him.

The next Number of my Magazine is scarcely begun yet. I have been delaying my own exertions in hopes of receiving ample aid but scarcely any has yet come and I am afraid I shall find it difficult to fill the prescribed number of sheets I have to make many apologies for not having replied to your letter yesterday but I was obliged to go over to Hyrampore which I did, and returned thence in the same way as to Calcapore and back, and this has knocked me up so much that I scarcely know what I write. Your good-nature is so invincible that I do not hesitate to give you a little trouble now and then Pray oblige me by looking out in the "Encyclopædia" the article Abracadabra, and if as I suspect you find there two Latin verses, pray copy them for me with author's name, if mentioned. I want this for a paper I have some thoughts of writing on nose-bleeding!!—or rather on the cure of it.

'Tis "the witching hour of night when churchyards yawn."—Adieu!

LETTER XX

August 1811

You promised, at your leisure, to give me your opinion of No 2* Pray do this, and spare not whatever you think deserving of censure. I hope you will like the paper on Silence, because it cost me some trouble, and it will be hard to find I have wasted my time No 3 will be very scanty I intend giving a series of letters on the different kinds of false wit, and, for this purpose, shall treat in this of chronograms In my subsequent numbers, puns, acrostics, bouts-rimes, centos, crambos, riddles, &c &c shall each have a letter If any thing good in any of these subjects occurs to you pray send it to me

You recollect I spoke somewhat slightly of Miss Hamilton I did this, because I was at that

* Of the manuscript periodical before referred to

time employed in criticising a terrible blunder of hers, which you will see in No 3 but pray do not think so ill of me as to suppose I think ill of her. She is the most elegant writer of the present day male or female. I am never tired of admiring her beauties her *Modern Philosophers* and "*Life of Agrippina*" are above all praise yet I have ventured to criticise an error she has committed. No *name* ought to shield a mistake and to detect inaccuracies wherever they may occur is laudable. I hope you think so and will acquit me of the slightest degree of malevolence.

For No 4 I have a capital article in criticism, but it will be time enough to speak of this a month hence. I have had no time to attempt an essay and have put it off till too late hoping some correspondent might favour me with one but no one seems to like writing prose except my friend Captain H***** the remainder of whose Journal I shall insert in this number.

Your *Mickle's Lusad*," I have kept a very long time indeed. I have only as yet read one volume. Sporting magazines and newspapers are just now my deepest reading yet I am going to ask you to lend me another book. I want some

light reading, and know of nothing more entertaining than Drake's "Literary Hours" Will you have the goodness to send it to me? Have you read Dallas's "Morlands?" I have them, and shall have much pleasure in sending them to you.

It is now pouring in torrents—a horrible gloomy day; and my thoughts always keep pace with the weather, so that I had better conclude.

LETTER XXI.

August 1811

As you think the Sonnet tolerable it shall be inserted in this Number for we must not be too fastidious. The other piece is in an infinitely better style. The *verses* is smooth, and frequently pleasing but, alas! I see Mr — can never aspire higher than myself. It is but poor praise to be what Johnson calls *one of the gentlemen who write with ease.*" If you do not recollect the passage I must quote you a little explanatory epigram —

" They write with ease to show their breeding ;
But easy writing's stupid reading "

I had not a tumble, as you fear the night I left Coosimbazar but the road was terrible and I could excite your pity by describing the perils I encountered by flood and field. Certainly as you observe, the sound nap was in more danger than the gay fancies.

I am obliged to you for thinking the "Mofussil" worthy of being sent to Calcutta. Mr S***** is, as I hope, as good-natured as yourself; in this is my only security against criticism; intrinsic merit is out of the question, and I shall not be so impolitic as to show it, but to kind friends

Drake's "Literary Hours," I thank you for Dallas's "Morlands" I do not think particularly good, but certainly worth reading, had you not already done so I have read his "Percival," "Aubrey," and "Knights," all which I admire *moderately* He writes in a pleasing manner, but has many superiors, I think, in his *line*

You will be surprised at an article in No 4 of the "Mofussil" (if it live so long) about the "Morlands," which is *professedly* an *original* work, yet I have now before me a French book, from which the one-half has been stolen,—not merely a line or a thought here and there, but a whole volume, word for word!! This is terrible, who could have expected Mr Dallas to have committed such a theft? What is surprising, none of the critics have detected him! R***** discovered the gross plagiarism a week or two ago in accidentally picking up a worm-eaten volume of French

tales. The original is "Le Lord impromptu," by M. Cazotte.

The novel called "Home I met with at Patna but not knowing the author and not liking to enter on four or five volumes at a venture I did not read it but if I again fall in with it, I will do so immediately since you admire it. The rule I have laid down for myself—only in novels—is not a bad one I never take up one unless I know the author or have received a recommendation. By this I may sometimes lose a little amusement, but it certainly prevents my reading much to waste.

I have received some more songs from Rungpore Mr Manning has at length, very unexpectedly obtained leave to travel through Bootan—he is to set off in a week. R***** however tells me he has strong doubts of his being able or willing to proceed further he has learned scarcely any thing he says, of the language.

You will be pleased to hear that I have at length good hopes of M****. He writes—'If it were but one-thousandth part as much in my power as it is in my inclination to contribute &c.—that is, you know the rest—I once saw a review with extracts from Lord Valentia's Travels, from which it appeared

to me that his work required much correction from some one who has lived longer in the country, and knows better than his lordship I wish you would ascertain this point, and if I am right, tarnish his lordship's tinsel with a few drops of your best critic acid, and if you can procure the book" (which of course he shall have immediately) "for my perusal, and I find Lord Valentia tripping in the natural history part, as I have reason to think he does, from his talking of Hyænas in Calcutta, and saying that no one in Bengal knew that the *Bermuda* produced castor-oil, till he made the discovery, &c. &c —why, I will furnish you with a botanical rod for his lordship!"

Of course I know better than to interfere. M**** shall flog his lordship entirely by himself, and, with his wit and knowledge, I would not be poor Lord Valentia for any thing I know M**** so well, however, that I shall not be surprised at his resolution "oozing out of the palm of his hands," before he gets the book, and yet, if there be a subject he will write upon *con amore*, it will be this. Such errors enrage him. At all events, having once moved him, I expect very much. You may be sure I shall now redouble my efforts in that quarter

LETTER XXII.

August 1811

I AM very sorry to hear of these headaches for as I am frequently troubled with them myself I know how much they annoy—for there is nothing worse. I am so often attacked, that my mode of operations is completely systematic. I adopt a method—one part of which I am sure no doctor would recommend—yet, as it always succeeds, I recommend it. Above all things I avoid lying down, but sit up with my feet in hot water—kept constantly hot for half an hour—and read, during the time some book that I am sure will make me forget myself. In half an hour or an hour it leaves me. Hot water ox and cold water internally I consider as a complete panacea as to physic, give it to the dogs—I'll have none on t I detest the stuff

You misunderstood me when I said I would let Mr S**** know I was acquainted with the author

of the poem in a *note*; by this I did not mean a letter, but a *note* appended to the verses I have done it as follows. He mentions in one part of his lines, “Beachy Head,” a place on which his mother has written a very beautiful poem, I have therefore written under it, “This spot is now classic ground, for it hath been consecrated in the verse of the most elegant of the modern muses, a muse whom, though ‘melancholy marked her for her own,’ yet Venus *quintâ parte sui nectoris imbuit,*’ (hath imbued with the quintessence of her nectar—thus is from Horace,) and whose lays are so exquisitely melodious, that, as she sings, they take the prison’d soul and lap it in elysium! The Lesbian Sappho conferred immortality on the Leucadian Promontory, nor will Beachy Head live less long in the sweetly plaintive strains of the Sappho of the present day ‘*Tu quoque litoribus nostris—eternam scribens famam Caroletta, dedisti!*’ (Thou also, O Charlotte, has conferred eternal fame on our shores by thy writings!) This is from Virgil, merely substituting *Caroletta* for *Caïeta*, and “writings” for “death” The measure is equally kept The original relates to Æneas’s nurse, *Caïeta*, giving her name to a hill on which she was buried, and

which even to this day, is still called "Gaeta." He can scarcely be offended at this, for I have only said what I really think though I much fear my compliment will be thought to be turned rather *pedantically*. It is, alas! my usual style—I cannot conquer these inveterate habits.

My third Number ought to have been with you before now and that it has not, is not *my* fault. I finished it by the 13th but my abominable writer has thought proper to be taken ill. It is at present at Calcapore where a writer of my father's and one of Captain H*****s are copying it. When they have finished it will be sent to me to correct, and then I will forward it to you but I do not expect this to be before the 24th these people are so slow. However you lose nothing by this from *me* at least for whatever little credit you may be pleased to give me for my former attempts I shall forfeit by this. The truth is (for a bad workman must blame his tools,) my indigo season has been so execrably bad, and such a thousand things have kept me in constant vexation that to write ought fit for you to look on was utterly out of my power. I scribbled something because honour obliged and did not tear it up because I

despaired of doing better. Luckily I had a large supply of contributions in the poetic department, and these, I hope, will keep me above water.

Pray write to me whatever you hear from Calcutta—good or bad. As they know not the authors, the opinions will be very fair; and we must not complain though they may handle us roughly.

I tremble for Mr B***'s opinion, should he see it; and yet I hope he may,—even to hear of censure from him, would be an honour. At all events, I must not be backward in *daring*

Captain H***** has played me a provoking trick. He sent me a paper written on the Spanish Patriots, when the business commenced. I sent it to him back, begging it might be modified to suit present time and circumstance, and he very coolly tells me, he has so much upon his hands, that he requests I will alter, curtail, or enlarge, as I please! As I did not care very much (*entire nous*) about politics, I again returned it to him, saying I could wait till he had time, but he has again sent it to me to make the necessary additions. I will do no such thing, for to give my *political* sentiments as another man's, is not correct, especially as I differ from him in several points; but I will bring the

paper in with me when I visit Calcapore and will make it over to D*** and yourself. If he will touch it up it shall be inserted if not, it must travel back to Dinapore. You may not chance to disapprove of the one or two passages in it which I deem *republican* and, if so may very well modify it, for only a conscientious punctilio prevents me. Captain H***** has so much obliged me that trouble, time or any thing in my power I would readily exert for him. I enclose this paper—read it—and, if you are good-natured, suggest any alterations and make a little addition, to give it a temporary interest. The parts I do not like, are the praises of the French *Jacobins* (excuse the term—but I am a strong Burkeite) and the quotation from the *Marseilloise* hymn, which treach'rous kings confederate raise." Is it not rather a confederation against kings, and honourable kings—of Spain Portugal, and England—by a treacherous scoundrel usurper? Spain in its present glorious struggle, and revolutionary France have in my opinion no points of resemblance. Where in Spain, is there a *La Vendée*? Moreover this is not a *revolution* in Spain, as he terms it but an honourable struggle for the continuance of the old order of things. I

suspect Captain H***** of being a *Foarte* I hope you are not one. I know D*** is not I have written to Marsh, and so urgently, that I think he will keep to his resolution I congratulate you on the arrival of the fleet, nor am I less anxiously looking out for letters

The disappointment you met with in "*Agrippina*" was very provoking. I recollect the chasm; but it is not filled up with a common-place novel, but with a sheet of Miss Hamilton's "*Modern Philosophers*," which is also an excellent work, and, if you have not read it, borrow it of my father "*Agrippina*," I agree with you in thinking, is a delightful work, the writing is peculiarly chaste and beautiful, and every part of it is historically true You must borrow again until you meet with a perfect edition—for not a page of it ought to be lost I read it in England, and it was in re-reading it that I discovered my father's copy to be imperfect

German sentimentality I detest I do not at all sympathise with their Wertens or Julias, but I sometimes almost feel a half tear in reading Miss Hamilton, Mackenzie, or Mrs Opie I will not, however, pretend to feelings I do not possess I never

really cried over a book or tragedy in my life though I have constantly felt the inclination.

I am rejoiced to hear of your triumphs on the chequer'd field, but your *drawn* game with Mr H***** I do not understand—continue how ever to beat Mr P***** and I do not care. I am very sorry to hear of Mr T*****'s being so very ill. I am happy always to be of your opinion, for I think him a very sensible amiable and strictly upright man. This is a long letter but my pen has run away with me as usual. You have desired me not to make apologies but I must, and yet I know not what to say for trespassing so largely on your time.

LETTER XXIII

August 1811

I HAVE at length begun on No 4, and my first affair was to answer Lysander As you wished to see his letter again, previously to its insertion, I now have the pleasure to send it, with the rough sketch of my reply—rough indeed it is I never so scrawled, scratched out, interlined, or in short, wrote with such difficulty and so little satisfaction to myself, but I am not afraid of submitting even a foul copy to your inspection To take a pleasure in finding fault is completely out of your system, you are generous, and you make due allowances

I have not said all I wished, and very little indeed as I wished I believe my best plan will be to tear this up, and write completely anew I cannot at all contrive to give my style a proper tone it will, in spite of all my endeavours, be loose and inconsistent with itself What I like in it least,

is its constant tendency to pertness. Pray do not imagine that I am fishing for a compliment—you are above this. I am only speaking of myself as I really think but as I see my errors I do hope in time to correct them. Reading with more attention the best authors is my only remedy. I think I shall find in them neither such a capering style nor such a load of quotations as I am at present guilty of. I must be less flippant.

If any thing occurs to you to add, alter or omit you will not behave well if you fail to suggest it to me. I know you have candour and good-nature enough to tell me what you think and not to be angry with me for the trouble I gave you.

LETTER XXIV

September 1811

WITH the greater part of the contents of No 4, you are already acquainted For Mr Dallas's plagiarism, or rather detecting it, all the credit is due to R***** In looking over my original I find I have made an oversight, I have omitted to mention Cazotte's age, which would add interest, therefore, in a parenthesis, after the words, " was of the same age," write over the line (seventy-four) The lines from "Delille" I would have translated but that I thought my readers might be affronted at my supposing them ignorant of French—and who that understands it would have thanked me for a tasteless version when the original is so beautiful?

The next paper, on catching sparrows is curious, it was written by Captain R***** There is one *blank* in it—this was in the original Braggadocio, you know, I had from Mr ——.

The Spanish *Revolution*, as I disliked its principles, I did not touch. I expect G M***** will answer it immediately it reaches him

Apollyon* you were indulgent to before and you must not be less so now Should you show it to any in Calcutta, pray only ascertain whether they think the author has made too free with things sacred. Thinking of it impartially I cannot suppose that this inference will be drawn should it be by sober minded persons, I shall hear it with regret, and blame myself much for not having attended to the admonitions of the friendly Secretary and tearing it up but I really do not expect this sentence of excommunication will be passed by persons whose opinions are entitled to deference.

The next verses are by a sister of Captain * H***** s. I admire the warmth with which he praises her in his introductory letter and who I understand from other quarters really deserves them. Some of the lines are very beautiful nor will I criticise them. I think you will like them—they were to the memory of her husband's brother

The epigram from the Greek and the translation of the motto are Mr S***** s.

* Parody of Virgil's "Pollio."

The first translation of the Persian lines is by Mr S*****, the second by Mr P*****

The translation of the epigram is by Mr W*****. This resembles very strongly one of mine—but not so strongly, I think, as to induce a suspicion of plagiarism, at all events I plead “not guilty” to it

All in the next page are “make-weights” to fill up my ten sheets with

The *bull* actually happened at Rungpore, if I am to believe M****, &c, from whom I heard it there

If you have any curiosity about the Latin, without doubt you have friends at hand to explain it I have been guilty of one *pun* in the introductory letter to Apollyon As usual, I have run through two or three sides about my own nonsense, and I am the more reprehensible for this, as in Calcutta you can have little time to waste on its perusal, but I am not to make excuses I did not make my *duzce** sew together the sheets, as I observed that No 3, done at your house, was so very much neater

I wrote M**** all Mr B*** said, but the philosopher of “Safatabee”† has not answered

* A tailor—one usually forms a part of every gentleman and lady's establishment in Bengal

† Mr M's residence

my letter—indeed I did not expect it. He must be too much engaged with Lord Valentia —not that I shall ever see his criticisms—that is out of the question. This letter is already too long so I will not extend it beyond this side. If you can decipher it, you deserve much credit and if you cannot, you lose nothing

LETTER XXV

September 1811

THIS will find you preparing to return home, I hope By your arrangements, you will lose (what I know will afflict you *very much* !) a great deal of Moorshedabad gaiety My father gives a large party on the 30th, Mr L** on the 2d, and the officers of the 9th a *ball* on the 4th

The comet I had the pleasure of seeing, first on the 19th, and many nights since How is it that there are no astronomers in Calcutta? None of the papers noticed it for several days, at last, one called it "a luminous body, resembling a comet" Mr B**** yesterday tells us something rational about it, yet even he has given no *astronomical* notice of it. I have anxiously been looking out for a notice of this kind as I wished to know how much reliance I could place on my own knowledge in the science, having observed it with a sextant for three nights, and calculated declination, right

ascension, &c. &c. It is a particularly large one. You are not quite right as to its position relatively with the Greater Bear and to place it near his ear you must turn the poor animal topsy-turvy. It is immediately under his tail, and nearest to that star in the Bear which is called *Dubbee*.

In the last "Mirror" I hope you observed Mr —'s Elegy. I wish he had made less free with Lord Chatham—introducing him is very bad indeed. He has changed his motto since sending me the last copy and judiciously for the one he had was about palaces of kings which were not very appropriate to his subject. There is also a very bad conceit in the last couplet. I have, however for No 5 a very good copy of verses from him which I am sure you will admire.

I am sorry to hear you have had no chess. I am with my father for a week all business being interrupted by the Doorgah but, having no Cosimbazar to drive to no verses, no chess no letters or anagrams to puzzle at, no speeches from —, no conversation with yourself no laughing with Miss R**** no anything but a fall and noisy house here it feels very stupid. My father it is true, is always conversable and agreeable; but I

cannot get near him without also encountering half a-dozen *messieurs*, &c , and these are not always favourites of mine

I have sitten down so late to write that I must conclude, or be too late for the *dák* , and there is no time to lose if I wish you to receive in Calcutta my best thanks for your pleasant letter of the 24th—one sentence of which my vanity does not intend to allow me readily to forget.

LETTER XXVL

September 1811.

If I have calculated rightly this will find you just arrived. Welcome back at Cosimbazar!

I am extremely gratified by your approbation of No 4 and very grateful for your kindness in obtaining fame for me. Poor No 5 I tremble for it—having an abundance of poetic contributions. I have been, as usual improvident in the other parts; and only two days ago thought it necessary to begin. I fear I shall be much distressed for my usual quantity of prose this month.

I have just finished a paper on “Jesuitical Verses,” and have papers On the Caves of Canara, and “Character of Chenjez Khan, from Captains H***** and R***** but I want very much something light and gay as an equivoise

I mean also to insert my Imitation of Phineas Fletcher in this month's Number for I am happy

to say I agree with you in thinking it one of my most successful wooings of the muse. This I say without the fear of being accused of vanity, before my eyes; for, indeed, I court the coy maids with so very little success, that it would be hard if I might not boast of the one or two smiles they have given me. As Phineas, however, is very little known, it will be necessary to give a few prefatory remarks on his poetry, and, for this purpose, I shall be much obliged to you to lend me the volume that contains it.

I did not send my observations on the comet to Mr B****, because, simply, I am a mere tyro in the science, and should not have liked to receive a tanning from any of the sagacious Calcutta stargazers, but I wish some one else had done so, for I wanted to know what degree of reliance to place on my attempt.

As to the ball of the 4th, I have no literary friends in the 9th—so that, alas! the embellished account you will be disappointed of. Moreover, it terminated in a little fracas, which could not well be mentioned, unless I could get my friend H P to give it in some such excellent punning style as the following “One preacher of peace was rather

riotous and, *gor'd on* by wine, attacked our pastor but this soon *past-o'er* he next raised a tempest in another part of the room but this was allayed by *showers* and he at last thought it best to run off in the *night* for fear of the *day* This is horrible, but I assure you it is a very correct *imitation* General P***** who is equally inveterate in the art, observed that night, on the falling of a *chopper* as the dancers were beginning, that it was a pity to be *chop-fallen* so early but the General is famous.

I do not expect to hear again from Colonel S***** but I hope to have the pleasure of seeing him next month, and will then most certainly *ran sack* either his brain or his portfolio. He must make me the *amende honorable* for having delayed his aid so long As to M***** if I ever do hear from him I shall certainly laud the gods. I do not quite despair for he has written a long letter to my father But miracles are rather rare now a days—*d-propos* of which, I am very glad to hear you have procured Hume and Beattie, and hope to have, by and by your sentiments on them.

Yesterday was certainly the worst day I have seen in India the pelting rain howling wind and

I have frequently seen a man lying as I describe, while the liquor is *poured* into his mouth from on high, (this by the way was a Roman custom also but it would *not* do to confess that the Bengalees have any thing *classical* about them.)

The smoker of b'hang or hemp is attacked precisely in this manner. The effects are known to be so horrible that a man addicted to the vice which seems to be most *infatuating* always conceals it as much as possible though his eyes and general state of mind must always proclaim it. I have not finished this picture yet but must describe the "b'hangoe" in his sober hours—and these are almost as horrible as his drunken ones. Yet in spite of all this I like India very much and would not care to quit it could I but call one half-dozen persons out of England.

Pray oblige me by criticising freely and if you think it altogether good for nothing then—I was going to say—throw it into the fire—I mean—tear it up

LETTER XXVII

September 1811

HAVE the goodness to send me the original of Desbarreau's Sonnet which I gave you. I wrote it out at Calcapore, where I was obliged to trust to memory, and it is in consequence incorrect. Here I have the book, and can make a correct copy for you.

This is one of the finest pieces in the French language, and the sentiments in it are sincere. Desbarreau, from being one of the worst principled, became the most rigid penitent. His constant prayer in the latter part of his life was—"Oubli pour le passé, patience pour le present, et misericorde pour l'avenir." My attention was turned to this piece by a warm eulogium, I think of Addison's, in the "Spectator." Voltaire, too, though he admires the poetry, abuses the sentiments of it, which is another reason for liking it.

A-propos de rien—Pope's "Messiah" first appeared in the Spectator. If you will take the trouble to look for it there you will find that it was professedly written as "an imitation of Virgil's *Pollio*" which proves the fact I asserted. It is, however more than an imitation—it is a *free* translation, or paraphrase. What is curious, is, that Johnson has translated this *back* into Latin—it is one of his best performances. Virgil would not have been ashamed of it, and Pope was in raptures when he read it.

Pray let me have your opinion of the accompanying letter. Tell me what parts you dislike. Correct, insert, strike out, or suggest any alterations that occur to you—in short, deal with me as I would by you and I shall be very very much obliged to you.

(Eleven o'clock at night,
quite time to be in bed.)

P.S.—By the way I might as well notice here what I forgot before—a curious blunder in the Essay. Prior is spoken of as *collaterally* descended from Adam and Eve. If this were the case it must follow that these "good folks" had either brothers, sisters, or cousins. If the query were put to the author I think he would be a little posed. Did this blunder strike you in reading it?

LETTER XXVIII

September 1811

MANY thanks for Kirke White He has come just in time, for I have been trying this morning to compose a *cento*, into which I wish to pay him the compliment of weaving a line of his—a *compliment* indeed! I ought not to have used that word—but no matter

I don't know whether you ever tried cento composition, but if not, I can scarcely recommend it, for it is most annoying work I sat down to it because I was resolved to go systematically through all the species of *false* wit enumerated by Cambridge in his "Scribleriad," and this is among them

"From different nations next the cento's crowd,
With borrow'd, patch'd, and motley ensigns proud,
Not for the fame of warlike deeds they toil,
But their sole end, the plunder and the spoil "

I have completed mine, and will, in a few days,

when I have written something of an introductory letter, send it to you. You have I think you said indexes to your music books if so might I beg the favour of you to look out the songs beginning—

Busy curious, thirsty fly and “Come dear Amanda, quit the town, if they should be in your collection, and inform me by whom the words were written. I wish to know

I am really very much obliged to you for penciling the parts you do not approve in my reply to Miss Lucretia.* I know myself to be very often guilty of that fault of saying *too much*. That I shall adopt your suggestions, I do not doubt but I must see them before I can say so—for a compliment *in advance* would be only to yourself whereas I wish to pay it to your judgment.

* A paper in the M.S. Magazine often alluded to in former letters; and great part of which was published under the title of “Indian Reminiscences.”

LETTER XXIX

HOWEVER unwillingly, I must confess that you are quite right, compliments may be true, and yet savour of the extravagant, of such nature are mine. I never write but what I feel, but I own I love to write up to the very brink of that feeling. I do not quite overstep the bounds of truth, but I always tread on them, another step would be into hyperbole, and thus is approaching it too nearly. It is wrong, and I can at least thank you for correcting my taste

Keep the Magazine as long as you please. Of course I have no use for it here. I am not quite so far gone as Crabbe's Magazine Poet—

“Who, nameless, here inserts his idle rhymes,
And reads his first-born work a thousand times”

I send Desbarreau's “Sonnet” I send also my

oento and will point out when next I visit Coesum bazar the separate lines I have taken from the works of the several poets. The two marked anonymous in the last stanza, are from the two songs I enquired about but the authors names are of no consequence it is sufficient that they are not my own. The Introductory Letter I have not yet written, for I have been very much busied the two last days. I intend communicating it as an art by which persons, however devoid of genius, &c., may mechanically write verses and shall amplify on what a *modern* poem ought to be with a compliment, if I can bring it in any how to Charlotte Smith and Kirke White but it will be sufficient to trouble you with it when finished.

LETTER XXX

October 1811

As it is now time for me to begin my task, I shall be obliged to you to return me the answer to Miss Lucretia.

I received, two or three days ago, a packet from Captain H*****. As it all relates to the "Mofussil," I send you its whole contents. The "Address to Serena" I have only partly read, its length is, of course, at present an insuperable objection, indeed, from its nature, it could not have proved generally interesting. But of its merits I cannot speak, for I have *not yet* read it. You may or not as you please.

The letter "On Snoring" I mean to insert, but not Mr ——'s, for I cannot perceive a particle of any thing like argument in it. To contend that plagiarism is not criminal, must have much inge-

nity to save it from being absurd. I really do not think it has sense or humour enough for insertion of course his controverting any of my positions has nothing to do with it. If he cut me to pieces let him but do it with wit as his weapon, and I would be very grateful to him but thus I think stupid. Shall I put it in?

Captain B*****s Ode to Liberty I do not like the sentiments of, but it has, I think enough of poetry to justify me in inserting it. I am undecided, and should like to receive your opinion.

You must know what it is to be haunted with a tune. I was so all this morning I could not help humming to myself Campbell's song on Copenhagen and the Prayer-book chancing to be at hand I tried to turn a Psalm to the same measure. I got through the first six verses, but there meeting with a difficulty I stopped for a more inspiring mood. I send you the fragment just as it is without troubling myself with polishing. Have I preserved the measure correctly? I am not certain that it is Campbell's exactly but I think the abruptness of the metre has capabilities of serving as the vehicle for even sublimities.

If you should look out this Psalm in your Prayer

book, you might as well versify the three verses that are wanting, that is, if you think my foundation worthy of a superstructure, if not, tear it up, and I must revenge myself by trying something else

LETTER XXXI

November 1811.

As I did not read "Serena," I did not perceive the name it is very likely to be meant for Mrs — I have asked Captain H***** the question. The verses were written by Major H***** a relation of Captain H***** &c. — Al to — I have fairly told Captain H***** that his letter is flat and unmeaning—utterly devoid of both salt and sulphur. As to his argument about the book being liked better in one shape than another the premises are false but not worth arguing about. In another part he has put me quite into a passion he dares to quote Johnson as authority for asserting that there is no crime though the plagiarism be admitted. This is a vile aspersion on our great Moralists character for he was of such strict integrity that he never could have offered, and never did an excuse for the violation

of truth In No 95 of the "Adventurer," which Sophister quotes, Dr Johnson by no means defends the practice; on the contrary, he reprobates it strongly. His arguments merely tend to prove that the charge of plagiarism is not to be lightly raised, for that the strongest resemblance of sentiment and expression may exist without any intercommunication—persons situated in like circumstances naturally have the same train of thoughts, and these thoughts must often be expressed similarly, it does not therefore follow, that if their description of any passion or object be alike, they necessarily copied from each other, for the resemblance is equally accounted for by allowing that they each copied from the same model, or nature His whole argument has but this front, and surely this does not bear out Mr L——.

Dr Johnson only speaks of resemblances which may be accidental—of what is, and what is not plagiarism, but he does not attempt to argue away its reproachfulness when it is allowed to be so What would then be his sentiments may be easily judged, from a very analogous case When Lauder made his infamous attack on Milton's reputation, he forged quotations to aid his argument. This was

fully detected and exposed by Dr Douglas and the outcry against Lauder being very great, he came to his friend Dr Johnson for advice who with his usual manly integrity recommended and wrote for him a full confession of his delinquency and request of forgiveness, on the grounds of a sincere repentance. Part of this apology was thus—' For the violation of truth I offer no excuse, because I well know that nothing can excuse it nor will I aggravate my crime by disingenuous palliations—I confess it—I repent it—and resolve that my first offence shall be my last So much for Dr Johnson's defence of plagiarism. I could not help vindicating him though I know with you he does not need it. But L—— made me bristle up my back and my pen ran away with me as it does at every second word. With respect to the "Mercator" of Johnson, and "Transfer" of Dr Moore the characters certainly approximate very closely but it would require much ingenuity to establish a charge of plagiarism for here No 95's arguments would wipe off the imputation—the character being so natural and common, that two writers may easily have depicted it without borrowing from each other's bottles. A similar one occurs in the "Spec

tator," another, I think, in Goldsmith's Essays, and I am sure I could point out fifty copies of it. But if I had read none of them, and had been desired to describe a retired old Cit, I think it would have been in precisely the same manner, though, of course, in very different expressions. With respect to the "Ode to Liberty," as it is poetical, I shall insert it—its political merits form no part of my duty to enquire into. I am only responsible, as editor,* for the necessary decencies—the decorum of language and morality. Captain B*****'s production is certainly too warm, but, the circumstances of the case being considered, may, I think, justify him. His purity of zeal is undoubted, for he had his leg broken in the cause, and if he erred in principle, his error is to be respected, for it leaned towards virtue and philanthropy. For my own part, however, I differ very much from him. No one can have a warmer love for the Mountain Goddess, but warm as my love to her, is my detestation of her twin sister, License; and it was at the altar of the latter that the French Revolutionists, in

* Alluding to the manuscript magazine which was circulated a few months, for the amusement of friends, at a Station up the Country

my opinion, sacrificed every thing estimable. That the state of things under the *ancien régime*—the monarchy of France—was good, or even to be borne I think no one will contend. A revolution was necessary—was inevitable—but not such a one. They should have kept the glorious 1688 in view thus was firm temperate and attained its desired ends without any counterbalancing evil. But very different was their conduct. Because some laws were oppressive, they strove to disengage themselves from all law both human and divine because they were abused on the points of Religion, Justice and Property they destroyed these personages altogether. In short to speak hardly metaphorically their head ached, and, as a radical cure, they cut it off disease lurked in their body and to reach this, they pierced themselves through every vital part. They were slaves and they found themselves suddenly emancipated the consequence was natural—revenge, rather than reform because the order of the day. They abused power in proportion as they had felt it abused and, in a word as must be on all slaves holidays, license was mistaken for liberty and the French Revolution was only the Roman Saturnalia, on a larger and more terrible

very poor essay and I was rather ashamed of the paucity of wit it contained. I cannot help agreeing with you as to the Psalm. Messrs Sternhold and Hopkins beat me hollow it was certainly a miserable attempt. Yet I am not sorry I sent it to you, for you are a very fair critic, and it is but just you should see my best and worst but pray tear it up now lest any one else should see it—and that I should not like. You are mistaken as to the point of measure. ‘My Hookah’ only resembled it as being composed in triplets the metre is totally different, and belongs to another order. But to explain this, I will scan each of them for you the mark ~ stands for an unaccented or short syllable and this – for a long or accented one. The first, second and third lines of ‘My Hookah,’ are as follow ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ – and the fourth is ~ ~ But in the Psalm the first, second and third line runs thus ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ – and the fourth is ~ ~ ~ Technically speaking the one is *Iambic* the other *Anapaestic* measure. By the way I have never seen a good account of English versification. Dr Johnson speaks very scantily of it. Landley Murray is more full but still not full enough. A good ear is enough in the writing of verses; but to be

able to criticise, it is necessary to be fully acquainted with the theory of their structure, taste may tell you that a column is wrong in its dimensions, but architecture must be studied to understand where the fault lies. Now English verse is very simple in its rules and as accent in English stands for quantity in Latin, the rules of Latin prosody may very easily be applied to it. Without resorting to any hard words, it may be arranged into regular orders, and the whole construction be thrown into a clear and familiar view, as divided into simply four classes. But more of this another time. I will, if I can, at a future leisure hour, draw up a regular and short account, with examples of *every* measure that has been used by English poets; and, giving a perfect form of each, will detail how far poetic license will admit of swerving from it, &c &c. I think my reading in this branch is sufficiently extensive to complete this plan to your satisfaction, and, at all events, I will do my best. Though I allow my Psalm to be good for nothing, yet I will not give up the measure as being not capable of, sublimities, or at least great beauties. Campbell's song, which does not, I think, much differ, is an instance of the latter, and I yesterday met, in

a review with another very strong one—it is a prayer of Herricks, an old poet, of whom a full account is given in Drake's Literary Hours. I have copied it out for you, and I hope you will like it for the quaintness you must make some allowances for the age in which the author lived, and then I think you will agree with me in thinking it beautiful. I liked it so much, that I had it by heart almost at a reading. I think them excellent, and agree with the reviewer who calls them "noble numbers."

Thank you for the improvements you have suggested in my note they are all very right, and I will adopt them. I am glad you like the note and am obliged to you for having advised me to write it but I still wish you had done it yourself. All my observations of the Comet went no further than to ascertain his place each night in the heavens and what I have done with these I know not but they were of no use and threw no light on either his size, distance or rate of progress. To ascertain these requires instruments I do not possess it is necessary to measure the angle the body of the Comet *subtends* (there is no other word) and it being easily ascertained what angle the earth situ

ated similarly would subtend, the proportions that these bear to each other will give the proportions of the Comet's size to the earth. The theory is extremely simple, but I had no instrument for taking this angle. In your "Bonnycastle's Introduction to Astronomy," you will find fifty times more information than I could give you on the subject, but I shall be happy to try to explain any part you do not understand. The only thing I wrote on the subject was a paper which I had some thoughts of sending to Mr B****, which calculated the precise *quantity* of danger that the earth is in from the visitation of these eccentric bodies. This I have been looking for this morning, but cannot find it, it is destroyed or mislaid. I will hunt for it for you with much pleasure. I have scarcely any Italian books—a very fine edition of the "Decameron" of Boccace—a poem called the "Muse," by Zansillo, with a verse translation by Roscoe—3 vols (incomplete) of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered," with a French close translation of it—these are all. If Miss W***** wishes to read them, I shall have much pleasure in sending them. I have commissioned a friend in Calcutta to buy for me all the Italian books he can pick up, as I intend to apply

seriously to it. At present I know very little about it, so pray don't mention me as an Italian scholar to Miss W***** For a beginner the "Jerusalem Delivered" with a French translation on the opposite page is a very good book. I saw Colonel A*** on his way down and, from the little I saw of him was inclined to like him very well and, from the way in which you now speak of him, I am very well satisfied with my skill in physiognomy though I must confess, I never studied Lavater His manners I thought very mild and gentleman-like but I had no opportunity of course, of knowing more.

LETTER XXXII

December 1811

I AM very much obliged to you for Moore's poem I like it very much indeed, it is as beautiful as any thing he ever wrote, and that is saying much—for he is the most facile and elegant writer of the day I have taken a copy, and return the original with many thanks.

But, if criticism were allowable, I must confess there is one part I do not like, it is that in which he speaks so slightly of the Swiss. "A Conqueror oft—a Hero never," is not doing them justice, they have often been heroes, for, not to return to the glorious time "when the proud Austrian fell—beneath the shaft of Tell," they frequently afterwards nobly defended themselves against the attacks of the feudal princes of France; and this, indeed, is the truest mark of heroism,—they never made a war of aggression, though they never allowed their

liberties to be encroached on. Even though now swept away altogether as a nation, (1811) it was not without a struggle in which even women and children devoted their lives to their country

That they were mercenaries, it is true but no common mercenaries. Having no wars at home the more restless and enterprising were of necessity obliged to fight for others if they fought at all but they never raised their arms against their own country and always were the *best* and most *faithful* troops to whatever power they served. Louis the Sixteenth's Swiss Guard should not be considered as mere hirelings they were true *heroes*—if *fidelity* *valour* and *honour* be a title to the name.

The way in which Ireland is introduced I admire particularly. Indeed, I like every syllable of it but that which concerns Switzerland.

I have not Charlotte Smith's poems, or would send them with pleasure the two or three poems I have of hers are in a volume of poetic extract.

Your mention of *The Missionary* is the first I have seen. I shall be glad to read it as Miss Owenson is a favourite of mine but we may expect pretty blunders if she comes to India. I recollect reading a novel in England wherein mention was

made of a party of *Rajahs* riding out together, after dinner, for exercise!!

I agree with you in disliking very much my Preface I ought to have taken the greatest pains with it, and it was not only the most hurried and carelessly written, but is the worst paper in the work, but still I have strong objections to re-writing it In the first place, I have washed my hands of the work, and I like not in any way to touch it again, but this should have little weight against your wish, I would immediately set about it, were this my only objection, but there is one much stronger—it is not fair I have sent it out in this state, and five or six copies have been taken When it went from my hands, I gave up all power over it—it went “with all its imperfections on its head,” and to make now the slightest alteration, would not, I think, be equitable or right, at least this is my opinion, and when next I have the pleasure of seeing you, I will speak further about it

I am much obliged to Mr B**** for having given my translation a place in his paper I did not quite expect it, first, because he might have thought enough had been written on the subject, and secondly, because he could not have received

it before his press was set so that I consider it as somewhat of a compliment. Mr — will at once guess from the signature whence the translation comes and he may perhaps receive it as an expiation for having omitted to insert his last contribution.

I have just received a note from my father telling me he expects Mr R***** from Rungpore. As I have always much to say to him, and much for him to do in Calcutta, I must post in and then hope I shall recover part of the three games at chess I have lost if I do not and am beaten more, I shall return here and study Sarratt night and day.

LETTER XXXIII

December 1811

THE day on which I arrive at my factories I find myself generally unfitted for more serious business, and therefore usually scribble something I send you the labour of last night, being an attempt to describe the Comet's path among the stars I will not vouch for its accuracy, as it has been more the work of memory than observation, but it is sufficiently correct for all my purposes You won't criticise, I know The reason of the Comet's beard being in different directions, in the three sketches I have given of it, is, because the tail or beard is always opposite to the sun, but the earth's motion affects this appearance in the manner you see I call it a *beard*, because it is returning from the sun, and, consequently, marches before the Comet itself, when it is going to the sun, it follows the body or *nucleus* of the Comet, and is then called a *tail*

When this fiery appearance is seen all round the Comet (as is sometimes the case) it is then said to be *hairy*. There are numerous other names for it but these three are the principal.

I hunted for the papers I spoke of this morning and have found one more. It was written subsequently to the one you have and contains what notices my memory and reading could find out respecting them after writing the paper you have. By consolidating the two and pruning a good deal something fit to send to Mr B**** when the next Comet comes may be made out.

I was sadly out in my prediction. I expected it would long ago have disappeared and it would have done so had it proceeded with an uniform rapidity equal to what it set out with but it has been retarded very much more than I had any idea of. But enough of this stupid subject—and I have just now none other to write on.

LETTER XXXIV

December 1811

ON the other side of this sheet I have copied out my translation, and am much flattered by your wish to have it I will also, if you please, send you a copy of the original Latin, for any learned friend who may be at any time allowed to peep into your collection, and yet this will only serve to get myself criticised as an unfaithful translator, for I must confess I have taken very great liberties with my original I have ventured to hitch in a little of my own, for which I know not what the author will say however, though not literal, it is quite close enough I have received Beattie, and like much your likings and observations—the “Minstrel” is with me a particular favourite Modesty is certainly admirably described—but though I can’t tell exactly why, yet the “Ode to Hope” does not altogether please me, the last

stanza I think the best and the epithet "severe" which you have underlined, I admire. Was your pencilling intended as a mark of approbation or not? I agree with you that Master Hay Beattie is made to look like a very prim stupid school boy it is impossible it could have ever been a likeness and I wonder how the father could have allowed such a face to disfigure the volume—the clear frill and fresh-combed hair is very just—really this is a libel on Lavater and deserves prosecution. He was a wonderful young man, and deserves to be ranked with Kirke White, Chatterton, and Dermody. In talents however he is the lowest of the four and in amiableness I will not allow him to equal my favourite H. K. W. The other two in this the greater point, were very low indeed. The poem on Christianity is beautiful, as is also a short Ode commencing "Power of these awful regions, hail!" Swift and the Bookseller is very good but little essays of this kind ought to be polished and re-polished until they contain not a single fault—now he has marked, as faulty and incorrect several idioms and expressions which not only throw analogy but the usage of our language perfectly justifies. For instance no reason can be alleged

why "*in future*" is not as good as "*for the future*," both have *authority* to countenance them "To put an end to his existence," is no more wrong than to say, "he is no more," for existence means simply *being*, and it is of course understood that we speak, in this instance, of *sublunary being*, indeed, Swift himself implies a *cessation of existence*, I think in the following couplet—"The Dean, alas! no more is mis't—Than if he never did *exist*" "To *feel* sick," is, in my opinion at least, very good English Johnson, among the definitions of "to feel," gives "to have a sense of." There are several other terms against which I do not see any just cause of complaint

In a dialogue of this kind, Swift himself ought to have been made to speak the purest English Now his phrases throughout are low and inelegant, and several of his idioms, though justifiable by usage yet deserve to be considered as much colloquial barbarisms as any of the Bookseller's For instance, "I take your meaning," "the deuce he did," "to be put to hard shifts," "I take to be," "to enter into a detail," and several others

The dialogue between Johnson and Addison I do not like at all He has not in the least imitated the

manner of either Addison's style has a beautiful colloquial simplicity equally remote from the turgid and weak and this I am not surprised he has failed to imitate for it is *immutable* but Johnson's is very easily mimicked. By this I do not mean that the merely using hard and uncommon words will give us a proper representation of his manner—by no means. To imitate an author by copying only his faults, is to resemble the disciples of Pythagoras, who expected to acquire their master's wisdom by eating pulse and drinking water. Yet this is the common error into which imitators fall. Campbell adopted it in his *Loxiphones*, and has consequently given a caricature of Johnson, which is as much like him as I to Hercules."

For a pure and real imitation I know none better than Dr Hawkesworth's in his papers in the *Adventurer*. And for one a little *outré* but highly characteristic Jephson's *Tour to Albridge* is admirable it represents the style as it really is—very much inverted sonorous phraseology periods rounded and *rising* always to climaxes, a great deal of antithesis, and sentiments, strong true and imposing. But enough of this prosing

You have accented the *Hermit* perfectly pro-

perly, and I pronounce you, therefore to have an excellent ear. Why did you not mark the measure of all the other poems? There is not a single error. The measure is called anapæstic, and consists of an alternate double stanza, each line having four feet (anapæsts, or - - -) The only license allowable is that the first foot may consist of only two syllables, as—"when nought," the rest must be each of three, as may also the first, as—"at the close." Looking it over again, I find you have made one mistake—you have marked one line thus, "And mōrtals the sweets of fōrgetfulness prōve." The accent ought to be on the second syllable of "forgetfulness."

My paper is out, or I should not let you off so easily for I am in a scribbling humour, and have fifty subjects to trouble you on, with my prosing. You may therefore thank my want of room.

Your long-looked-for pleasure is, I hope, at length arrived and you have your friend Col A*** at Cossimbazar. I will not ask you to remember me to him, for the acquaintance of a day has no right to two or three years' memory.

LETTER XXXV

February 1812

I HAVE not written since you left this, because I really could not muster up reason enough for writing a letter or I certainly should not have foregone the entitling myself to the pleasure of receiving a reply add to which I did not quite like troubling you when in Calcutta, where you have so many things to think of

Had I been triumphant I should not have delayed a moment to acquaint you with my victories. In justice therefore I must not conceal my defeat. Mr S***** —dreadful name!—arrived here on the 11th. I dined with him at Mr F***** and after dinner played with him two games at chess both of which I am ashamed to say I lost. This was really shocking and I have scarcely yet recovered from it —sleep for that night was, of course impos-

sible! however, I have the vexatious satisfaction of knowing that the first game *ought* to have been mine—it was terribly provoking,—I had two pawns more than him, a very strong situation, and in short, with the commonest play, a certain game in hand, (within two steps of queening,) my king was so placed, that a checkmate threatened, had it not been for one outlet, but that one was as good as fifty, and indeed no danger then, making the most ridiculous oversight, (a child of three years ought not to have done it,) I placed my queen on that very outlet, and was consequently checkmated on the spot, but 'tis vain making excuses The second game was won from me by dint of good play alone I have nothing to reproach myself with in it—no carelessnesses, no oversights I was completely outmanœuvred, and was obliged to cower before superior play Mr S***** plays, I think, remarkably well, with undeviating attention, and great brilliancy, but though he has beaten me, and though it is vanity to say it, yet I really think he is not much superior to you and me From the specimen he has given me, I must allow him to be a better player, but from his play altogether, I will not acknowledge that he could give me a pawn, or that

he could beat me two games out of three for any continuance nay I am not very much afraid of him—but that is vanity—however it is useful, for nothing is better at chess than a little self-confidence He went away the next morning so that I could not get my revenge however the next time I see him I will endeavour to hold him harder battle or if you see him first, pray do beat him and beat him without mercy I have scarcely played but on that night With Mr H***** I have had a few games, but we continue on our former relations He by no means improves.

My father has written to me that he has seen you and from Mr R***** I have had some account of your gaieties it is all the reverse here—excessively stupid however D*** says you leave Calcutta on the 20th and then we shall be of course gay again. I hope Miss R* * * was pleased with the masquerades though this is a question I need hardly ask—it is an amusement that must exactly have accorded with her constant hilarity The concert, too must have pleased you both I am sorry there was not a play to have crowned the whole We have very little news here

Pray do not take the trouble of copying my

papers on the Comet, which you spoke of doing I do not at all want them they are such trifles, that to burn them would be to treat them according to their deserts, but I am always willing to place myself under your discretion, and all papers, therefore, of mine, you are welcome to do what you please with I have been doing scarcely any thing of this kind lately my only essay has been on a subject you would never guess—the Evils of Paper Currency You will laugh at this, and ask me, perhaps, what I can know about financial subjects,—very little certainly, but I was obliged to write, because M***** called for my opinion, in giving me his own and D***, who is, you know, *au fait* at these matters, has done me the honour of asking me to let him read my lucubrations over a *second time*, which I consider as a high compliment M*****, not content with a prose treatise on the subject, has given me, too, a little tractate in verse It is not, however, of the purest paper currency of Parnassus, and is therefore, as depreciated, better adapted to the subject It is a philippic on Mr Horner, the President of the Bullion Committee, and the point of it is, that he is inferior in sense to the

" Youthful Horner—who roll'd the regal'd eye,
 Cull'd the dark plum from out his Christmas pye;
 And cried, in self-applause, How good a boy am I!"

I answered him in prose for my loyalty to the Nine would not permit me to debase their inspirations by wasting them on such a theme.

In poetries I am quite at a stand. A translation or a pointless epigram is my utmost flight now I must not, however send a letter without an offering Accept the following charade, on you will immediately guess whom—

My first is th abode of fair Verity
 My second aids Travellers celerity
 And Fashion's my third in sincerity;
 My whole is a name,
 Which the loud trump of fame
 Shall joy to hand down to posterity

This is all very silly but what am I to do? I cannot write without a spar and at present I have none

I have been in here for a few days with my friend R***** who left me yesterday He wished to stay longer but his travelling companion would not remain one moment longer than the time first fixed.

Had you ever an ear-ache? If so you must excuse this scrawl, for I am at this moment in ex

cruciating tortures with it, and, worse than that, I have had it now sixteen days, with scarcely a moment's intermission I have exhausted the *Materia Medica* for a cure, and am just where I was I never had it before, and was not aware till now that pain could be so exquisite, but I am *almost used* to it, and do not let it interfere with either business or amusement

LETTER XXXVI

February 1812.

HAVE you heard from Colonel A***? I hope he will not forget his promise of writing from every station he passes. I very much like and agree in as far as my slight knowledge goes your praise of his character he is indeed, as much as I have seen of him a most worthy being and does certainly possess the strongest benevolence of soul. Whether these are Johnson's words or not matters little they are not the less beautiful or expressive as your own. I observed him much while here and need not mention the result he has I am sure, not only this strong benevolence but also the most sympathetic tenderness of soul. He would not only relieve but share in any distress feel pain at the most perfect stranger's sufferings and weep at any tear he saw. Am I not right? But I need not ask you for I saw in a thousand instances

you through them *pray underline with your pencil* those parts that you particularly admire but do not let this hurry you as I have fifty books in hand, and have read Young almost fifty times. I like his *First Night*, I think, the best—the beautiful passage on sleep—the sublime one on man—(*How poor how rich' &c.*) on life and immortality—(*This is the bud of being* ") that beginning—

Beware Lorenzo a slow sudden death and the very poetical close— *Dark, though not blind. Mæonides, like thee,"*—are all exquisite.

I particularly admire, too the whole passage beginning— *Sweet harmonist—and beautiful as sweet!*" on *Narcissa's* death. The glowing warmth too of some parts of his poetry and the richness of his colouring make one regret he did not write a few pieces less melancholy and dedicated to love and beauty alone. For what youthful poet could fancy when he loved, any description more beautiful than—

" Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of
Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life!

or more sweetly apostrophise the painted flowers
who dwell in fields"—

“In morn and evening dew you beauties bathe,
 And *drink* the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow,
 And out-blush (mine excepted) every fair
 You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,
 Which often cropt your odours ”

But were I to cite all the passages I think beautiful, this letter would not very soon come to a close —so “ come, expressive Silence, muse the rest ” And now for another poet, somewhat, it is true, inferior to Young, but still of no mean price He has cost me eight rupees !!! I allude to the elegant author of —, he well deserves all the *encomiums* you bestowed on him. The first passage deserving notice is his very beautiful and poetic appropriation of Sterne’s sublime idea,—

“ The accusing spirits from all parts rebound,
 And Heaven’s Chancery echoes with the sound,
 No pitying tears for crimes like his are shed,
 As the recording angel marks the deed ”

The *judicious reader* must determine that he has fully succeeded *Rebound*, to be sure, is not quite clear in its sense, — but Longinus on the Sublime observes, that every thing obscure is magnificent Perhaps, however, *do bound* would have improved both the meaning and melody of the line, especially as this author is very much attached to those elegant

little expletives which Pope has foolishly censured by saying —

“ And ten dull words do creep in one dull line ”

In the last line of the above quotation, too both rhythm and rhyme are a little violated but we must make some allowance for the ebullient feelings of the author which make him so often seem to consider them as matters of the slightest moment. The only consolation I can offer poor rhyme and rhythm is, that they ought not to care for a little harsh treatment since in this gentleman's hands, they are used to it.

The next poem——but it is not fit that I speak of it. A star is not a fair judge of the moon which makes it ludo its diminished head. Cruel Mr —— what have I done to offend thee? But you may ask how I have discovered his name——by a very ingenious pun he has made. In speaking of the Hudibrastic measure he says——

“ Surely a *Seward* the style may use
Which e'en a *Dutler* dared to choose ”

The little epigram on North East West and South, conjoining to form the word *Acres* is very good. But let not the ancients be deprived of

their laurels—the merit of this is due, to my certain knowledge, to Mr Joseph Miller. As to the little *jeu de mot* about “I’ve a *lack* of rupees,” this is, without doubt, *an original* idea of the author’s—at least it is perfectly novel to me. Perhaps —— may dispute the honour with him of its first mention. On the whole, however, it is very good poetry, on an *average*, but I must explain this. Poetry, you know, now conveys no idea but that of *measure*, (thoughts are out of the question,) and in Captain ——’s measures, he never sins on one side without retrieving it on the other. Thus, when eight feet are required in each line, if he gives one of *nine*, he immediately compensates it by another of *seven*, and should he ever sprinkle in a few of *ten*, he carefully gives, as a counterpoise, as many of *six*, so that they are all very good—*on an average*, which is highly praiseworthy.

I hope you have beaten Mr I**** at chess? Of Mr H*****, I scarcely need ask, though I know he will try to beat you, but you must not let him do this. I send you M’s paper on the bullion question. In my opinion, his view is very much too confined. He ascribes sweeping effects to very

trifling and insufficient causes in one great point too on which much depends, he is decidedly incorrect. He says— no article of life has risen in price whereas we know *every one* has and this rise of price is admitted on both sides in the debates in the House of Commons. If there is any thing in *my essay* you do not like or do not accede to pray tell me what it is, that I may come over to your opinion, or bring you to mine

You have I think, Boswell's Life of Johnson I should like to read it before it goes back to Calcutta. Boswell has been much ridiculed and certainly his exposition of the most unguarded and familiar incidents was not fair towards his friends. He had no right to be a spy to compromise them but the public ought not to censure a man who has contributed so much to their amusement, for in spite of all his *pettinesses*—his ridiculous minutenesses—he has given them a most entertaining collection of anecdotes and I know no biographer more pleasing or lively if I except Cumberland's account of himself which is much in the same style.

I have this morning received a very pleasing {

letter from Rungpore from my friend R*****, but I must first explain its enclosure, which I send you

When R***** was last here, we were speaking of Mr D**** of Rungpore, who is a very good classical scholar, and who, to the surprise of us all, lately took to *poetizing*, in which, however, he succeeded very indifferently. To spur him on in his Parnassian course, R***** proposed to me to write and send him a Latin poem, and to ask him for his remarks on it, together with a poetic translation. This I agreed to do, and as the subject was indifferent, I chose to write a Sapphic Ode on Anger, (you must understand that it was only called Sapphic because composed in the same measure as the Lesbian poetess used) I accordingly sent this off to —, but all our efforts were vain—he would only give me a prose translation of it. However, I have received something very much better. The great M**** himself has roused himself from his slumbers, and struck his mighty lyre. I need not tell you the enclosed translation is by him. His hand is very visible throughout, in my opinion, it is really excellent. What a pity that one who can

write so well and so easily should sit down in shameful indolence! The translation is close enough of course though "true to my sense" he has been truer to my fame and embellished not a little. But the original matters little it is his very facile and gay manner of writing that I am sure you will admire, in spite of one or two passages that you must consider as poetic licenses. The compliment he is pleased to pay me in the conclusion I owe him many thanks for unfortunately there is no such thing to be had in the country.

I have long been trying to get a Jew's harp. When I succeed I must carry his idea into execution and, getting Mr S** to be the harper I will chaunt forth my sublimely beautiful Sapphic lays! But seriously I admire M****'s verses very much and I hope you, too will like them.

The Latin accompanies for the benefit of those whom it may concern. I send you the original for the sake of the little drawing evidently by M** himself. When you return them I will send you copies.

I have been writing a long letter I scarcely know what about, for I had little to say when I sat down.

But this is an old fault of mine, and one for which I have very often already apologised, excuse it once more.

P.S.—The rain which fell at Moorshedabad on the 7th, did not extend here Yesterday I had a little foolish shower of ten minutes; but tell D*** it has done me little good I have not sown two hundred *bighas** altogether. This is too bad but what can be done? Nothing but patience will help me, and even that, what good is it of? To-day is what is miscalled a fine one—that is, it is very nearly cloudless—but it is all the same Yesterday there were plenty of clouds, but the cruel heavens would not *melt* However, I must keep in mind what a Persian poet says—and, for your benefit I will give you a translation of his words—

“ Though grief and rudest pun assail,
Still hope through dark misfortune’s hour,
From yon black clouds that low’ring sail,
May fall the lucid, crystal shower ”

The author of this sentiment calls himself Nizami My letter from Rungpore mentioned nothing of G. M’s health, from which I conclude he is much better

* A land measure—equal to one-third of an acre

I have a relapse of my ear-ache in the other ear however it has been with me three days, and gives me at times very great pain but I do not let it interfere with any thing I have to do I would not nurse it in any case but in the sowing season it would be impossible I am obliged to be out on horseback all the morning In short I treat it so much *en philosophe*, that I hope it will take affront at its treatment and go away

LETTER XXXVII

March 1812

I RETURN the Irish letter, which I have copied, with many thanks

I omitted to keep a copy of Sir Edward Colebrooke's elegant Anacreontics, and shall therefore be obliged to you to let me have those I sent you back for a few days. I will return them. I admire them very much, but I cannot agree to their being called *imitations*. An *imitation* I understand to be a free adaptation to modern images, but the only adaptation is the single word—Eliza. For the rest, they are not imitations, but very close, and, at the same time, spirited and elegant *translations*.

The merit, however, is not less, rather greater perhaps, to have followed in the track of so many great poets, and yet to dare comparison with any of them, for in these attempts he is superior, I

think, to Fawkes, Browne, Jenyns, and Young and not inferior even to Moore

After what has been done I know better than to venture on a *translation* of a single line but I am not afraid of attempting an imitation, and enclose you one (rather of the parodical kind) on Ode 29th. Before you read it, you must take down Fawkes Anacreon, (you have it amongst the translations in Anderson's Poets,) and turning over to the Ode be good enough to compare as you read. I should like to have introduced coat waistcoat &c. but confined myself rigidly to my original. When I speak of the *bag* and *solitaire* I venture beyond my depth for I do not exactly know what the latter is but hope I have applied the term properly. If you think it worth criticism criticise freely

I had a little rain last night, which enabled me to commence my sowings this morning and I am so completely knocked up with my exertions all day that I offer this as an excuse for my extra stupidity. If it rains again in a day or two I shall be satisfied if not, I shall renew my complaints against the clouds. I like your idea of their weeping to relieve themselves. I am sure they have been so long and

charged with hatred, malice, and all the other unchristian propensities that it was certainly not to relieve indigo planters that they wept—it was, as you observe all *selfishness*. I am much obliged to you for your enquiry about my ear-ache, it is, I think gone—at least it has not troubled me the last two days—but I still keep my head bound up, dreading its return.

I am always giving you trouble, but you are so good I am not afraid of doing it—may I then ask you, when Mr H**** returns the “*Mofussils*,” to oblige me by sending them to Mr A*****, who has long asked me for them? I have forgotten till now to ask you for Boswell. I do not apologise for cramped penmanship as I did not engage to mend it. I despair of improvement in my hand.

LETTER XXXVIII.

March 1812.

I HAVE the pleasure to return Boswell who has given me much amusement. His margins were so tempting it was impossible to refrain however as Dr Johnson says of his red ink and sponge a piece of India rubber will rectify it I am myself so fond of meeting with pencillings that I always contribute my mite why do not you? As, in sending it to me you did not indulge me with any opinions, I ought in return, to be equally silent but this with me would be against the grain—right or wrong I like to say something and very much more to hear Now you tell me where you took “strong benevolence” from I must say it is peculiarly happy The words of the quotation are not only strictly applicable but the two characters are so alike in all their parts. General Ogleshorpe must have been just such another colonel—a warm hearted tender

old soldier of the old school—a *preux chevalier, sans tache et sans peur*—there is a very strong resemblance Have you lately heard from him? but I suppose not Did you remark the two bulls in Dr Johnson's Journal at Paris? He says, the "*flints* were of *wood*," and "much of the *marble* only *paste*" In another place, he speaks of attacking Polyphemus' eyes You know the Cyclops had but *one* Do you recollect the story of a fly who perceived an unevenness in the dome of St Paul's?—à *l'application* There is one subject I can by no means agree with him on, that is the authenticity of Ossian If he heard me, he might say, as in page 457, "he knows much less of the matter than ourselves, I suppose," but still opinions are free, and we are not obliged to submit, unconvinced, even to the mighty *Cham* himself Authority, as precedent, goes little way Johnson doubted, but Dr Blair, and thousands with him, have believed, and still do so M'Pherson's not giving up the manuscripts argues, in my opinion, nothing against their existence, it only proves the more probable alternative, that he had no objection to pass for the author of these beautiful poems But this is out of the question, M'Pherson *could* have as much

written them as myself. He possessed scarcely any genius but that adapted for translation his own acknowledged poetry is of very inferior rate—and to suppose that the sublime “Address to the Sun in Ossian proceeded from the same pen is, I think absurd. Johnson says, *many men many women many children,*” could have written these poems. He could not have done it himself he had not enough of the fine frenzy. As a proof that at least this assertion is wrong how many attempts, in the manner of Ossian” have been made and has one of them succeeded? Not one they are as inferior as satyrs to Hyperion. For me I believe strenuously and ground this belief on a perusal of the poems themselves and all that has been written on them—that is, what Dr Johnson Dr Blair M Pherson Laing, the Highland Society and the reviewers have said. The report of the Highland Society published two or three years ago to me bore conviction after an impartial and thorough investigation, they prove that Manuscripts have existed, and affirm that themselves have seen, and possess many—that various passages in Ossian, especially the Address to the Sun were translated unknown to, and before the time of M Phers

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son. They have respectable evidence of persons who assisted M'Pherson in translating—who saw his Manuscripts—lent and gave others to him, and explained parts which he himself did not understand. All this is not vague proof; and on it the Highland Society, a respectable and learned body of men assert their full belief in the authenticity of the poems. Dr Blair's dissertation, too, carries great weight. It is a fine composition and has much good argumentation. The poems themselves have no internal evidence against them, (to avoid which had been impossible, had they been a forgery,) and very much for them. The only argument on the other side is, "Where are the Manuscripts? the Gaelic was not a written language." Becket the bookseller, it is known, once had the Manuscripts, but M'Pherson took them away again, and what became of them he would never acknowledge. Whether, in sullen anger at having his word doubted, he destroyed them, or finding, which is more probable, that many people believed him to be the author, made away with them to secure to himself the fame of them, is uncertain, but, doubtless, one of these was his motive. "Why not, then, if he wished for fame, boldly assert himself the author?"

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in the manner of Ossian have been made and has one of them succeeded? Not one they are as inferior as satyrs to Hyperion. For me, I believe strenuously and ground this belief on a perusal of the poems themselves, and all that has been written on them—that is, what Dr Johnson Dr Blair M Pherson Laing the Highland Society, and the reviewers have said. The report of the Highland Society, published two or three years ago, to me bore conviction after an impartial and thorough investigation, they prove that Manuscripts have existed, and affirm that themselves have seen and possess many—that various passages in Ossian especially the Address to the Sun, were translated unknown to and before the time of M Phier

son They have respectable evidence of persons who assisted M'Pherson in translating—who saw his Manuscripts—lent and gave others to him, and explained parts which he himself did not understand All this is not vague proof, and on it the Highland Society, a respectable and learned body of men, assert their full belief in the authenticity of the poems Dr Blair's dissertation, too, carries great weight It is a fine composition, and has much good argumentation The poems themselves have no internal evidence against them, (to avoid which had been impossible, had they been a forgery,) and very much for them The only argument on the other side is, "Where are the Manuscripts? the Gaelic was not a written language" Becket the bookseller, it is known, once had the Manuscripts, but M'Pherson took them away again, and what became of them he would never acknowledge Whether, in sullen anger at having his word doubted, he destroyed them, or finding, which is more probable, that many people believed him to be the author, made away with them to secure to himself the fame of them, is uncertain, but, doubtless, one of these was his motive "Why not, then, if he wished for fame, boldly assert himself the author?"

Because he was aware as the Highland Society have shown that there were too many witnesses against him to have stripped him of his borrowed plumes. He trusted rather to chance

That the language was a written one is certain as there are many Manuscripts to be shown in it—which is proof positive. Besides the construction of Gaelic poetry was peculiar it did not regard the rhyming of lines or the accented quantity and arrangement of the words but depended in a singular way on the correspondence of certain initial consonants and vowels. Thus, in itself as adapted so much more for the eye than the ear, proves I think that their poetry must have been written to have been framed. But this is too bad to prose away so terribly. I hope you believe in Ossian and admire him. He equals in beauty and sublimity even the Grecian and Roman bards themselves. Boswell objects to their authenticity as having a monotony of images. He is a silly fellow. This is a strong proof for them for how could he have variety who living in so early an age could have had but a paucity of objects words and ideas? Hence the beauty of primitive poetry having but few objects for the mind to dwell on

it dwells on them with the greatest intenseness, and it is not flattered away, as in later times on a petty variety of prettinesses. But enough, this subject has warmed me and I could not forbear rapping out a few verses in praise of my favourite. I send it to you without a single correction, just as it came, (except that I have copied it out fairly.) The magic lyre that hangs on a bough only to be seen, or struck by mighty birds, is you know, one of the Parnassian commonplaces. I call it an "Ode to Enthusiasm" * only in allusion to my own train of thoughts at the moment. I intended writing more, but "enough is as good"—"the proverb is somewhat musty," as Hamlet says. Correct it if you please but for me, I have done with it. I have scribbled a vast deal of nonsense—pray excuse it. Pray remember that this has no relation to a letter I wrote three days ago, and to which I hope to have a reply to-morrow.

P S—I send a basket of strawberries, to show you I have a garden.

* Published in "Indian Reminiscences"

LETTER XXXIX.

April 1812

MANY thanks for yours of the 30th but pray have no compunction for the future Throw my letters into that drawer of yours, and do not answer them till you have paid all your other debts and have nothing better to do all the favour I ask is, that you will not *huff* me as the King (I believe) is said to have done Gibbon— What! more scribble & scribble! As I cannot just now enjoy the pleasure of tiring you with my conversation—at least indulge me in that of annoying you with my scribbling—consider that Cosimbazar may be too pleasant without a little vexation.

I did not *skim* over Boswell I read him very attentively—he amused me much and enriched my commonplace book with a good deal of information. As to the pencillings you will have been disappointed if you expected *remarks on Boswell* I

never venture to fill the margin with any thing of that kind, my idea is, that if there be any subject mentioned in the text which a pencilling of a line or two can elucidate, or if there be any slight omission which can be supplied, or any allusion which may be explained, it may as well be done—and this not out of parade of learning, but the fair wish of giving and receiving information, in short, I would have written what would be communicated were two persons reading the book together. Pray adopt this plan, and read books with a pencil in your hand—do not consider whether what you write may not be known to some, but think only that there may be some who do not know it, and if one is benefited, you have done good—it is but fair, too, on the give and take system, that you contribute. To illustrate what I mean—Boswell speaks of Soame Jenyns, and tells us that Johnson was very severe on his book on the “Origin of Evil”—but he does not tell us why, now, as many readers may not have seen this book, half-a-dozen lines in pencil would not be thrown away on the subject thus—Soame Jenyns’ work was a disquisition intended to prove that evil and good are so inseparably connected, that no good can be effected without a concomitant ill, and, con-

sequently that no evil can be done away, without doing away at the same time some portion of good. Such a principle as it saps all morality, justly drew down Johnson's severest animadversions. I did not scribble down this but I might as well have done it for there may be readers to whom it would be information. Did you ever read Cumberland's Life? He gives an interesting account of Tenyns. He sums up his character with saying that though the worst arguer and the most awkward man he had ever known, he engaged in metaphysics and wrote a poem on dancing! Now I have taken such pains to explain pray indulge me with some examples. I am glad you liked my imitation. Johnson says nothing further of "Solitaire"—I have asked my father what it is. You disapprove of "clotted"—it is as you observe an ugly word—but I cannot think of a more *just* one. A nasty idea I certainly in some degree wished to convey—for what in reality could be more nasty than the operation of dressing the head of a beau of the old school? This to us is "a tale of the times of old" but there are hundreds who remember it—it was the business of a whole day. As much pomatum was worked in to his hair as would cling to it on this

two or three pounds of powder was heaped, again rubbed in with pomatum, and again powder was heaped, and thus till there was as much *weight* on the head as it would carry Recollect, too, that one of these heads was not *opened* (the technical term) for a month or two perhaps—and then, object if you can to the word “clotted” I can conceive nothing more disgusting—and that the picture I have drawn is *just*, is proved by what Standard says of Beau Clincher, in the “Constant Couple” “Nay, madam, my nose could not mistake him I smelt the fry by his pulvilio from the balcony down to the street”—rather a strange recognition, but it defends the term I have used, however, I allow it is an ugly word, and I would alter it were it worth altering, or did I write it over again I agree with you as to the other thing—ycleped Ode I like it much less than my tribute to Fletcher, (not that I mean to say that is good,) but allowance must be made. I scribbled off this in a great hurry—took little pains—and care little about it, and so let it die

✧ Why should I *scold* you about Ossian, when you say, “he is greatly sublime, and possesses much tenderness and pathos, and frequently took your

fancy captive? Could I desire warmer or more elegantly expressed praise than this for him? That you have not lately looked into him cannot draw reproaches from me—for neither have I. That your attention flagged may be accounted for without imputing want of beauty to him or want of taste to you. Even honey you know can cloy—and I agree with you that he is rather to be tasted than devoured—for his similarity of beauty frequently fatigues or to have kept up the metaphor palls upon the appetite. But that on the whole you like him I was sure of before you said it—you could not help doing it for the gods made you poetical. I did not mean to exceed a sheet but to answer a question of yours will I am afraid lead me into a second. Again let me beg you to forgive me for drawing so abundantly on your patience.

You ask me what I think of *blank verse*—that is of Johnson's opinion of it. It is certainly a prejudice carried to the length he carries it but I have more respect for it than any other of his prejudices. I partake very much in his veneration for the good old honest custom of rhyming—the I consider as the legitimate currency of the English Parnassus but at the same time I have no objec-

tion to the other True poetry is independent of all forms—it exists equally in rhyme or blank verse, or even in measured prose, but had I my choice of dress, I would stipulate for the “sweet recurrence of the frequent *rhyme*” I do not think that the “language suffers distortion to keep it out of prose,” when a real poet uses it, but in common hands this observation is certainly true How many turgid, inflated, bombastic thoughts, termed blank verse, do we not every day see?—Philips’s “Splendid Shilling” is the just satire on these But when a real poet writes in it, thus, like every other form, obeys him—thoughts must always master words, and the vigour of ideas bears along our admiration, no matter what the vehicle Thus, when Milton moves on so majestically and sublimely, who can regret that he uses blank verse? So excellent are his expressions, that we think no other form could equally well have represented his ideas, but this is an error He might have worn any dress, and equally pleased in any thus, who can doubt that the “Paradise Lost” would have commanded equal admiration had it been written in rhyme, who reads his “Lycidas?” Thus, though not without its faults, is, in my opinion, the most

melodious, the most poetical piece in the English language I wish you could hear Colonel Stuart recite it—I have frequently, and I never admired any poetry any recitation so much. Next Young—I admit his *Night Thoughts* to be exquisite but the measure lends them no additional beauties they would have equally enchanted us in the couplet. Pope's "Elegy to an Unfortunate Lady" is equally melancholy equally melodious. Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes* is too in the same strain and by no means inferior. Thomson's *Seasons* are admirable—but it is still the poet—for who will not acknowledge that Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* and *Traveller* are equally beautiful and who will say that Thomson's fame depends on blank verse who reads his *Castle of Indolence*? But now I have named the three towering Bards who please in that because they would have pleased in any thing descend a step lower Where is any thing more that can stand in competition with rhyming? Aken-side's "Pleasures of the Imagination" I would rout with Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope* Armstrong's *Essay on Health* must cower to fifty pieces. Pope and Dryden drive all the rest off the

field Glover's "Leomdas," who reads?—who can read?—and yet how easy to read epics in rhyme! Mickle's "Camoens," Dryden's "Virgil," and fifty others, are read with delight—blank verse poems, generally, if not pre-eminently beautiful, are read with languor and inattention. But as a just test of comparative merits, Cowper, as a poet, may challenge even Pope, but which is the translation which *is* read and *will be* read—Pope's, or Cowper's blank verse one of Homer? Blank verse, then, I consider as an engine only to be ventured on by very great poets, they can give it grace and beauty, though in itself it possesses neither, as is proved by the appearance it makes in inferior hands. Rhyme, on the contrary, equally is capable of the highest beauties, and contains in itself an intrinsic one that adapts it for pleasing, even when used by common poets. Moderate poetry is made tolerable by rhyme, only the best poetry can render blank verse tolerable. In this I consider to be their difference. How many poems are there to which the rhyme adds beauty and grace, and does not the "Rape of the Lock" owe to it many beauties? Does not—but to repeat all its praises would be

to panegyrisé almost the entire round of English poetry—Pope, Gray Collins—ten thousand names must stand forth in its praise, for to it how much are they indebted! If the rejecting the rhyme be a beauty in the heroic measure certainly by analogy it ought equally to be one in every other and yet without it how grating would the most beautiful Odes and Elegies sound! The experiment has been often tried and is almost unanimously allowed to have failed. Latin measures are abhorrent from the genius of our language Collins or Kirkc White may have produced one or two favourable specimens but the exception proves the rule. I am a good deal of Boileau's opinion—

“ Le vers le plus rempli, la plus noble pensée,
Ne peut plaire à l'esprit quand l'oreille est blessée ”

But where have I wandered to? This is indeed prosing with a vengeance but I will not do it much longer I think, then that blank verse with good poetry in it is beautiful—it has a majestic step and as it leaves you more to the poetry is well adapted for very sublime or very beautiful sentiments but rhyme might always supply its place without loss—and there are ten thousand

subjects for which rhyme is fit, and blank verse not,—so that, on the whole, I am a Johnsonian. Now, pray tell me what you are—but do not let the thought of Milton, &c., sway you—but say, were you asked your advice by a person about to write a poem on a common subject—what he should write it in, which would you answer? Do not, however, set me down as disliking blank verse—I almost, I was going to say, adore—that is, rapturously admire a thousand pieces in it, but on the whole, my suffrage is for rhyme. The other requires the greater powers, and may be sublime—the latter is more generally useful, and admits of every gradation of beauty. I could have adduced instances nearer home, but they would have told against me. The “Address to Love,” and *its companion*, you know my opinion of—but I again contend that it is to the *mind* displayed in them, not to the *measure*, we owe the pleasure they give us,—the measure is good, but the same images would have pleased in any other. I have scribbled till I am sleepy, so forgive what effects of my drowsiness may appear here.

The rain fell here last night, but very partially

—plentiful in one spot scarcely any in another I am taking every advantage of it and sowing briskly Calcapore I shall not revisit till my sowings are completed which will not I expect be very soon

LETTER XL

April 1812

HAVING had no rain, and consequently little to do, I have been enabled to read hard, and finished Boswell last night. I now return him with many thanks.

Thank you for the correction about Miss Linley—in writing Linwood my memory was treacherous. But pray, why did not you give this little piece of information yourself—was it not an illustration that the passage required? This is really too bad—you ought in fairness to have pencilled whatever occurred to you.

I cannot help laughing at the part where you say you are *too old* to mend at chess—really a very great old age!! Do your years press heavily? I, too, am beginning to be bowed down,—but I keep up my spirits, recollecting that Johnson, when

he was more than treble either your age or mine could learn Low Dutch—and I do not, therefore quite despair with your assistance of improving still at chess

You have brought against me Johnson's *only* sentence in favour of blank verse but recollect that the reason he gave for this 'verse unfallen uncurst, being particularly suited to the Night Thoughts was for what, though a beauty in them would have been a fault in any other poem— wild diffusion and digressive sallies" Regularity and rhyme are on the whole the best though diffusion and blank verse as seen in this instance may be exquisite

Young's Resignation written afterwards in rhyme shows that he was no very staunch advocate for what he calls "verse reclaimed" Your admission is quite as much as I want I have the pleasure to find we are of the same opinion precisely—for it is that rhyme may please in any degree either by the mind it contains or simply by melodious structure—but that blank verse admits of no mean—it is either abominable or exquisite—must being able to overcome its mechanical defect.

I will not give up the "Paradise Lost" on the score of sublimity—"Lycidas" soaring in some parts to the full as high. I think Milton could have preserved its beauties in any dress.

LETTER XLI

April 1812

RETURN me all you can find on China paper as these were my foul copies and I did not at the time take others. The Indian Evening I will return if you please but I had rather burn it. The Psalm you must allow me as a particular favour not to send you back a fair exchange is no robbery—I send therefore two pieces in lieu of them

To a Lady with Hammond's Flegies * was written several years ago I found it in tearing up a parcel of old papers the person to whom it was addressed must have been Mrs Muse I do not recollect any terrestrial that I worshipped at that time—it was all fancy But as an excuse I believe Hammond's Lady was equally in the clouds

His love, &c., is generally spoken of Lord Chesterfield speaks very elegantly of it, and so it is not unusual to consider him as another Petrarch—a real lover—but this I much doubt His *language* was certainly the real language of passion, but is not so *in him* When Tibullus used it, love dictated, but love is not a translator—and all Hammond is a close copy an almost literal translation, of Tibullus This proves his learning and taste, but I think not his passion, however, I am aware this is heretical.

The other piece I tried the other day, when in a passion with Mr Fawkes for “pinching his tail to make him go,”—this was so horridly vulgar an idea, and so vulgarly expressed Fawkes’s measure, too, I thought ill-chosen for the subject, the original is very simple, and considered as particularly beautiful, but it is of a kind of beauty not easily transfused into another language, therefore blame not the gentle Sicilian shepherd for the faults you may see in my version

If it is not giving you too much trouble, may I ask you to copy for me the first line of Kirke White’s translation from Desbairreau, with the volume and page in which it is?

What does D*** think of —? I wish I was the *padre* and I would lecture them from verses 2 3 and 4 of chap. II. St James. You must not be surprised at my quoting St James for this happens to be a favourite chapter and moreover it was necessary to refresh my memory by reading it over again as an antidote to Mr — calling good works splendid sins. I wonder how — — — thought it worth their while to suppress this unless indeed very wisely fearing that they would have gone to greater lengths.

I see very little to be objected to in this sermon but its whole tenor which is evidently raising faith at the expense of works. He says— As it is neither good works nor meritorious life will save us so neither will repentance save us —“ but faith and faith alone will

Now read St James as an answer to this. I think that he should have said that neither good works, nor repentance nor faith are singly sufficient—that no two of them are enough but that only the three conjointly are sufficient. He that fails in one point fails in the whole and without repentance for the past works for the present and faith for the future nothing is effected. Quoting

texts in favour of any particular one is useless—each has a thousand praises—which only prove that the whole is requisite

Wesley's doctrine, and which Mr —— adopts, is—"that works before justification are *sins*" Thus I cannot subscribe to I will admit that they form of themselves *no* justification but I cannot consider them as making a man *worse* If they are evil in their intrinsic nature, then is one of the component parts of salvation evil for St James declares none can be saved unless works be superadded to faith

The *presuming upon* works and simply the *possessing* them, are widely different matters If I might speak metaphorically, I would say that morality is the statue of Prometheus—perfect in its form, but without animation; and that faith is the vital spark which inspired it That the two co-operated, and neither had been sufficient—the perfect statue without the spark being useless, and that spark, had it been infused into a mishapen log, could not have made a man

Mr **** speaks of the danger arising from those who lull us asleep in impenitence, by telling us we are to be saved by our works If he means, as he implies, "works alone"—it is a doctrine I at least

never heard inculcated from any pulpit and if he speaks only of those weak persons, who may draw such an inference from the constantly recommended observance of morality the danger is certainly as great on the other side—that people into whose ears faith and faith alone is constantly rung should treat good works with disregard. I do not say that such is the original tenet of Methodism but such is the very obvious inference so much so that among the sect in England dirty rags is the common term for good actions. And they even have gone so far as to say (I have myself read it) that good works are the high road to the devil and one which he most prefers as most seducing.

But I cannot conceive how I came to think of preaching to you. Pray excuse it—this is really too bad—but my pen always outstrips judgment and every thing else. This is my thousandth trespass on your good nature.

LETTER XLII

May 1812

I HAD the pleasure of receiving your note, with the "Épître aux Femmes" enclosed. I now return it with a copy as you wished, and have only to say, that there being no trouble in the case, I have nothing to excuse. It is vile sinking paper that I have used, but I hope you will find it every where legible. There is one word in the original which I either do not understand or cannot read, in my copy. I have pencilled it—it is "paître" Do you know what this is? I admire this poem much, the verse is extremely easy, correct, and harmonious, and the sentiments good, though I like Miss Arkin better. I wish the author had dwelt a little more on the thousand interesting relations of woman. His picture of her firmness is very strong and beautiful, and he should equally have drawn her in pity, filial affection, true love, and twenty

other points of view I do not like the episode about whether women ought to write verse or not it is I think misplaced. But on the whole I admire it much. The concluding picture of the lone man is very well drawn. The passage I most admire is that beginning *Quoi! disais je* to the end of the paragraph. It is highly poetical and of this particularly the couplet about the nerves. There is a wonderful deal of beauty I think in the word *axace* though this term is so profusely and indiscriminately used in French poetry that I am afraid the particular beauty I allude to may not have been meant by the author. The breath of a bee *setting* the nerves on *edge* is an extremely happy expression and I never met with it before. I am not however just now in either an admiring or criticising humour which is *fortunate* for you. Do you know who is the writer of this poem? if so pray tell me. Immediately I received your note I sat down to the translation but have been as you will find in no poetic humour indeed my very method was formal and precise. I entered on my task as on a sum in arithmetic hammering through each couplet singly and then proceeding to the next without giving imagination the slightest

play, or having one fit or start to the end of my career. I might, perhaps, have corrected many parts for the better, but did not like blotting, and send you, therefore, my foul copy quite fair. This *China paper* I must have back at some future time, when I will write out, if you think it deserves it, a fairer copy, and try to make a few amendments. In this you may as well render me assistance. I have omitted to translate one couplet because I did not understand the allusion, and consequently might have made some blunder. I have no books here to enquire of. Ninon I conclude to be the celebrated, but "la Châtre" I know nothing about, and do not recollect, or never knew, of what nature the pen spoken of may be. Can you inform me? Perhaps the "Encyclopædia" may say something, under the article "Ninon de l'Enclos." The Soldan's love for a *nez retroussé*, may remind you of Roxalana in the "Sultan," but to account for this, the "Sultan" is one of those farces we have stolen from the French. Play, criticise freely whatever you do not like.

➤ I return the second volume of "The Gentleman's Magazine", and Miss Talbot's works. I like this lady's writings very much indeed, they have an

extremely simple and chaste flow and in my opinion at least so pure and correct are her sentiments that I give my suffrage to almost every word I read. Her Thoughts for the Week and all her Essays are admirable and in true good practical strain. Some of her Dialogues I like less than others. Her Pastorals I dislike the third imitation is the only one I admire. Her allegories are well kept up and her poetry is such as I expected—correct and elegant. Have the goodness to send me by the bearer of this Mrs Grant's Poems and Letters from the Mountains. I have heard from Rungpore of the arrival of the books but have no opinion. Marsh and Campo will I am sure like the lively Prince de Ligne. I continue to Adam Smith me till I get quite posed at the long crabbed paragraphs of which he gravely asks me what I think. I have now before me a desperate extract from book iv chap iii p 201 pray turn to it and tell me what you think. For me when I think of these matters I get into the state of poor Mr Hugh in Canulla when he was puzzling at his Latin grammar so I always put it off till I sit down to answer and then take things at a venture. I wish he would consult me about Charlotte

Smith, for really Mr Adam Smith and Lord Wellington are mere bowing acquaintances of mine, and to answer his letters I am either obliged to go through a course of political finance, or through a course of newspapers, and I do not know which is worse, but I must not tell him this, for he loves dearly to have a political argument, and why not indulge him? He is, I think an excellent man, and I must not grudge him the trouble Adam Smith sometimes gives me

I am sorry I shall not be able to come in to your party to-morrow; but I do not intend stirring until I have some rain to complete my sowings. I have not much unsown, but what is in this state may be considered almost as lost, it is now so late—and I am very doubtful of the springing up of a large portion of what is sown,—without rain I shall lose a very great deal. This watching of the elements keeps me in a constant fretfulness of temper, I am frequently unsettled, and unfit even to read. The last time I was here it threw me into a positive fever, it is, indeed, the most vexatious life in the world—and I would advise those who wish to keep the character of *philosophers* not to take to this employment, for they will certainly forfeit it

Now that I am about it I might as well give you this want of rain as an excuse for my bad verses and indeed my author says— *Il est dange-reux reproche en fonds de vérité*

Had I known the length of the verses you have so kindly copied out I would not have been so unconscionable as to have requested it I am really ashamed of myself! I am happy to coincide perfectly with you in opinion the lines are extremely pretty the commencement more particularly so and had they concluded at the place you point out it had certainly been better

Be the by (but you must excuse hypercriticism) in that couplet which you quote the grammar is false —

“What e’er the will of Providence assigns,
 ’Tis Infidelity alone repines.”

Infidelity repines whate’er —this is wrong, it should be —

At what the will of Providence assigns,
 ’Tis Infidelity alone repines.”

Still there is so much beauty in many passages in the latter part that I cannot regret but on ac-

count of the trouble you have had, that they are not omitted. As to the writing, I assure you I see in it no cause for criticism, it is more than legible. There is, however, one line on which I have my doubts. I read it and the preceding one thus,—

“ Though baffled hinds their fruitless toils deplore,
And *vales* uncheerful laugh and sing no more ”

If this be the correct reading, the sense is, I think, a little bad. Vales may very poetically be said to laugh, but of a *singing* valley I have no conception. However, by poetic license, the term may be defended, and the churiping of the grasshoppers, &c &c, may be allowed to give its epithet to the valley itself.

LETTER XLIII

May 1812.

I HAVE received your note with the third Number Pray do not write again on *note* paper—I do not want more than you please to give but I wish you to leave yourself room for any fortunate humour that may exceed your first intentions It ~~always~~ grieves me to see a note filled to the bottom for I cannot help fancying that want of paper hindered it from swelling to a letter—and indeed I deserve *letters* from the value I set on them

I have heard from Rungpore. The books are very acceptable to Campo but he complains of the number as too small (I sent him thirty) and, for fear of running short economizes as much as possible—reads only at night—and stints himself to one volume at each sitting

I like Mrs Grant very much as far as I yet know her but have only got through the first

volume. My attention is just now divided with much other reading five volumes on Hogarth—Irwing's "Life of Buchanan"—two or three volumes of reviews and magazines—Dehille's "Jardin," and a French novel, "Charles et Marie," are lying on my couch, and I am half-way through each. One book at a time were more regular, and perhaps better—but desultory and roving reading is what I have indulged in all my life, and the habit is now too strong to be broken, indeed, why should I wish it so, when this gives me so much greater facility of being always amused?

I think you would laugh to see the books I sometimes pore over for hours. Johnson's "Dictionary" is a particular favourite, and "Lackington's Catalogue" I find highly entertaining. In neither taste am I singular. Dr Robertson read the "Dictionary" twice over, and a lady did the same in its pocket form—liking it, she said, for its nice, even, short sentences;—as to catalogues, there are a whole tribe in England who read scarcely any thing else—the bibliologists. But I am as bad as Mrs Grant, digressing away most terribly.

Your account of the Quakers—Clarkson's—I never read, but I read one in England, which was

much more of the narrative kind, and in relating the missions and exploits of the early Quakers was very amusing. He gave a very entertaining account of a lady who went to convert the Grand Turk and of another who undertook the same benevolent office for his Holiness the Pope!

I agree with you that their theory is very beautiful and pure and the wonder is that though apparently too spiritual and refined yet it has been actually reduced to practice and preserved unimpaired since its first institution. But the fact is they are indebted for this not so much to their moral system as to the admirable regulations they have established for their internal polity. Their *piety* is certainly carried too far but this too has saved them from the shocks and revolutions of other sects. Some of their doctrines we may consider erroneous but they are undoubtedly civilly regarded the most simple blameless, harmless and pure set of people now existing. A Quaker is another word for integrity and unaffected piety—in short a character always respected and though I am not going to become one yet I do not like your friend the renegade for he left them *not*

on principle, I think—an offence that nothing can “*extirpate*,” you know!!

Whilst I have been writing this letter, it has been raining very heavily I am grateful for it, but it has come sadly late, and what I shall now sow must in all probability be carried away by the river, before ripe I shall have every thing completed by to-morrow, but must stay here a few days to watch its coming up But I must not look to distant dangers—“sufficient for the day,” &c Excuse all this prosing I *ought* to write in a better vein, since the long looked-for rain has at last come

LETTER XLIV

June 1812.

I HAVE nothing of the Mutus Scævola about me and cannot burn what I have a regard for besides keeping letters is a custom with me As a proof of this I send you one which will show that the little story I told was not an invention The little slip of writing on the outside signed L. A. is my mother's I value it much for the enquiry about the holydays is so very like her I suppose I had expressed impatience at the books not being sent which drew on me the name of "old growler" Any name was dear from her

The occasion of my having written the sermon alluded to was this My mother when at Bath had agreeably to her custom read some of my verses to my grand-aunt a pious charitable and really excellent old lady who after I suppose praising them duly recommended my mother to

turn my thoughts to serious subjects, and advise me to exercise myself in *sermons*. This idea so much pleased my mother, that she insisted on my composing one, which I of course did as well as I could. I recollect the text was in Jacob's story, but, like a pert unthinking schoolboy as I was, I at once travelled out of the record, and made a furious digression to attack avarice—the last thing I ought to have spoken of, as my grand-uncle was a decided miser, and in the same politic way, because my grand-aunt was a little touched with Methodism, I inveighed vehemently against the doctrine of “faith without works,” and yet how good-naturedly she passes this over! I did not deserve it. I cannot help laughing when I think how unadapted it was to my sober reader. One passage in it, as a *muster*, I remember, apostrophising avarice. “When Jove first cursed the world with ills, thou surely wert of the direst from Pandora's box!” And it was all in this rodomontade style, that would have cut into blank verse. I wish I had kept a copy, for it was a curious farrago, indeed, a *cento* rather than a composition, for it was brimful of quotations. Virgil trod on the heels of Moses, Hudibras jostled St Paul, and Job and Pope were hand-and-glove. I

had this trick then strong upon me and, alas! I have not yet broken it but I am trying to do so. Excuse this long story. I really cannot help running off to the right and left and must always exercise your indulgence.

Surely I could not have promised you interest in *Zastrozzi* for I felt none myself. I think with you it is too unnatural—in a great measure it is an imitation of the *Bravo of Venice*." I said it was deep but by no means meant *Radcliffeish* romance. Of this there is very little to be met with. Did you ever read the *Royal Captives* by Mrs Yeates? If not I think you would like it. It is at Calcutta.

Do not take the trouble of making out a list of your novels. Campo I know has not read any of them. If therefore you would send four or five sets to me I would forward them with as many more to him. He must not have all the good ones together or he will suffer afterwards. mix therefore good and poor together. He is a great book worm and will eat through all the novels before he has done.

I will return the *Epitree* and translation in a few

days. Pray, do not lose your French, but take up a course of reading in that language. The tragedies are perhaps the purest and most interesting. I can assist you with books in any line Did you ever read Florian's "Numa Pompilius?" I like it very much Think of this, and devote an hour every day to reading and writing in it, or translate backwards and forwards In my opinion, school ought to last all our lives! and, indeed, you think so too, for you go on cultivating and increasing your stock most laudably

I am very much obliged to the critic who pointed out the *mendable* part about "Madame de Sevigné" He or *she* is very right There is an ambiguity in the expression, which I will alter

My indigo plant goes on well, and is likely to do so, but this is very little I do not like unnecessarily to be gloomy, but I cannot help being so now, for my sowings were so late, that though the plant will thrive well, yet, unless the rains set in late, or rather the river rises late, the inundation must drown a great part of it before it is fit to cut I am in great, and not unfounded, fear for this season Operations I shall commence by the 10th of

next month I expect and then for a rustication of two months! However the manufacturing season is so extremely busy that time never hangs heavily. The cloud watching period is the most annoying

LETTER XLV

June 1812

I HAVE received the seventeen volumes, which are, I thank you, a plentiful supply

“Nares’s Essays” I have merely dipped into, (among his poetry you will find that epilogue I spoke of as belonging to the same play as that of Mr I——’s brother’s) I skimmed very lightly over the papers on the “Demon of Socrates,” and “Cupid and Psyche,” having read *almost* folios on these subjects, and not then being aware how well he had treated on them. The latter is the favourite theme of commentators, and it certainly deserves all their cares, for it is, without exception, the most beautiful fable in the whole round of Grecian mythology—a mythology that has “grace in all its steps” The extract you have quoted I am very much obliged to you for. This lovely story is dressed in it in suitably elegant expression ;

but you must not ascribe to Mr Nares or Jacob Bryant the merit of its discovery. The allegory as here delivered is the one that has been universally received since the days of Hesiod (I believe he first relates the story in his *Theogony*). In deed, in Greece itself it is scarcely an *allegory* the *literal* story signifying what Mr Nares has written.

Eros the Grecian name of this deity—means “divine love” in opposition to Anteros who is more properly the terrestrial god we call Cupid and Psyche or rather Pseuche is the Greek word for soul—it moreover signifies a butterfly which in Grecian fable is very gracefully accounted its emblem. And considering it as such Adrian made that beautiful address to his soul when he was dying that Pope has paraphrased in his *Dying Christian*.

Plato who had perhaps the most exquisitely refined mind ever existing dwells with rapture on this delightful story. I cannot help quoting what he says in this part. Speaking of beauty he defines it to be not the peculiar conformation of any limb or feature and not to consist in the particular blending of any shades of colours but to be a certain fascinating grace which delights the heart of

the beholder, and attracts his love This grace, he observes, though discoverable outwardly, is in effect the resplendour and ray of an interior and invisible beauty originating entirely in the amiable qualities of the soul.

This theory, at least, *ought* to be true, and, I think, generally considered, is so Hence, the ancients, in making Cupid veil his eyes, perhaps meant to infer that, “’Tis not a set of features or complexion—the tincture of a skin, that *he* admires,” but that the beauties of the soul alone can attract his regards, and only beautiful virtue conciliate his affections

Almost all the Grecian mythology is allegory—as you will perceive if you will read a little book you have—“Bacon’s Fables” Since you admire him, I will diligently read Mr Nares immediately you return him I hope you have used your *pencil* By the way, this gentleman was lately, and may be still, in conjunction with Dr Beloe, the conductor of the review called the “British Critic”

I am glad you so much like Braham, for often and often have I hung delighted on the mellow tones of his voice, and felt that thrill, with feelings which I thought, till I read your letter, indescrib-

able. His notes do certainly take the prison d
soul and lap it in Elysium. Johnson should have
gone to the oratorio you mention and if he had not
been affected at the airs you name and not felt his
breast swell and himself lifted out of himself at
the sublime bursts of some of the grand choruses—
why then he had been a stock—a stone. Nay
even Shakespeare from his rich vocabulary would
not have found a fit epithet for him. Johnson com-
plained that music took away his own ideas with-
out supplying him with any others and, literally
speaking I would not contend that it does supply
ideas—these, I would say belong to the brain,
and emotions to the soul and music inspires what
are of most consequence to us—the latter

By some secret unison with the chords of the
heart the harmony of sounds does most certainly
cause a harmony of soul and whether we can
account for it or not, surely that power is not
lightly to be esteemed which can raise the mind to
that elevated state in which it is fitted for every
thing great and good, and is expanded by the most
benevolent and self-complacent feelings. Such I
think, without exaggeration is the state of the
mind after a sublime or affecting piece of music.

I confess myself partial to the system of associations, and with what does not music associate?—
“Far as the pure air spreads its living zone—That language of the soul is felt and known.”

Simply instrumental music, however, I am not very much alive to. I like it—but with it I do not feel—“the glowing mind—disturbed, delighted, raised, refined!”—except, indeed, “Cecilia’s mingled world of sound!” The organ is imposingly sublime, and capable of any thing. But the voice—and such a voice as Braham’s—who would not hear “with ravish’d ears?” My taste, however, is completely of the “lullaby” order. I like melancholy “sing willow” ditties, and if the *words* are to be *heard*, and pathetic—I need no “List, list, oh list!” I love Goldsmith when he says he could cry at a country maid’s singing the cruelty of Barbara Allan. But I am as usual cantering away, *selon mon ordinaire*, but I will not apologise, for you have frequently given me permission to scribble what I please, and I therefore indulge myself in saying just what comes uppermost. I must have pretty good confidence in your patience and good-nature when I sat down to fill this sheet in so small hand-writing. I wish you would think proper to retaliate

I did not say any thing about Schiller as it was a re-reading, and I thought I had spoken to you about him. I do not think any thing can bear comparison with the fine horror of the Robbers but I like Don Carlos next to it. Which is your favourite?

Your recollection of thirteen years is very perfect. I agree with you that Leo and Camilla are the most interesting personages. You ought originally to have read this in French, but not now as your having read the translation would dull the pleasure of it. Pray put your serious thoughts into execution and commence a course of French reading—the sooner the better. Say what kind of reading you prefer and very probably I shall be able to supply you with it. Have you read Corneille? His Cid and Brutus are admirable—or do you prefer prose? I confess I am partial to stock pieces and as it cannot be expected that we should read all French books I think we ought to select and read the best. Pray do begin and it will give me a fillip—for I will follow you through all your books.

As I cannot expect you to do what I do not myself have the goodness to lend me Madame du Deffand I have not yet finished one volume of

her As far as I have yet read, the book contains little anecdote—exaggerated *sentimentality* on the part of the lady, and fastidious unamiableness on the part of the gentleman; but it is nevertheless light and entertaining, and I will finish it for its *Frenchness* sake.

I send a copy of the translation, but have been idle, and have not yet finished with the original I think it is Churchill who observed, that in correcting his verses he felt like cutting away his own flesh This is certainly a strong figure, nor do I at all participate in such feeling, yet still, out of pure indolence, I do not like the task of correcting I have not therefore made any alterations, except in the one part pointed out by you As it at present stands it is a very prosaic line, but I could think of no way of euphonising it, and, indeed, in ten syllables there is very little elbow-room to make emendations in. I am not aware of any liberties I have taken with the original, except substituting “sonnets” for “madrigaux,” as more suited to an English ear, and omitting, in one place where “saucer-eyes” are spoken of, to translate “qui déplairoient en France,” because I thought it came in very like a stroke of the *bathos*

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I send you a little piece I translated from the Persian which I hope will please your taste. I do not know its author. The original was given to me by a brother of Mr R***s. I like the turn of the thought and it is curious as being—in its form its connection and manner—very unlike the generality of Persian short poems

LETTER XLVI

June 1812

THE accompanying nonsense I wrote yesterday, and purely for the purpose therein mentioned—to conjure up, if I can, a smile, which I have a right to expect on the same ground that a bad pun, &c. makes us laugh as much as a good one I do not know that it needs any other note than that “Old Ben’s St Peter” alludes to the poetaster in “Every man in his Humour,” who “swears by St Peter—to make out his metre”

By all means keep the “Rape of the Hat” as long as you please, indeed, I should say, keep it altogether, did I mean to keep it myself

I am very sorry to hear that you are not gaining strength D*** told me that you were very, very thin, pray do reduce this abominable mercury as fast as you can, for your general state of health is the first thing to be considered, your trial has been

severe but it must soon, I hope be over and you must never submit to any thing violent again.

It would be very wrong in me at this time to trouble you with letters did I expect any return to them but distraction of any kind is good, and I have the greatest pleasure next to conversing in writing to you—am very anxious to hear how you are—and, so far from expecting a return, must unsay what I before asked, and insist on your confining yourself to a little slip of *note-paper* and giving me only a little bulletin of your state of health. Pray do say you are better—not faint, and in good spirits. This last is the grand point and D*** says you have kept them up admirably My manufacturing season will begin about the 10th July and I must make one visit to Calcapore previously when I shall hope to see you again exactly as you were a month ago

I will not talk to you about books but I am reading a very entertaining life of Dr Joseph Warton, and which if you think you can read it with pleasure I will send to you.

LETTER XLVII

JEU D'ESPRIT MENTIONED IN THE ABOVE LETTER

June 1812

HAVING nothing better, I must, with an "à-propos de nulle chose," contrive to eke out a letter Did you ever chance to observe, in reading "Cowper's Life" by Hayley, where the poet, being in a merry nerve, writes more than usually gaily—a curious kind of an epistle, which looks for all the world like prose? yet, as an artichoke may sometimes be taken for a thistle, so this, when examined close, turns out to be as proper verse as any Muse would think of writing, I know I wish mine ne'er wrote worse, whene'er I felt the rhyming maggot biting, but that's a wish that perhaps will be fulfilled as soon, as the spoiled child's, who, as the tale goes, whimpered for the moon

Yet, mark me, I would not be thought to say, that Cowper was the inventor of this fashion, for that would sad ignorance betray, and he, who for

the muse pretends a passion, ought at least carefully in his mind to treasure the history and genealogy of every rhyme and measure.

If then to my researches I can trust, the merit of it is due to St Patrick's Dean, whom, by the by you will always find the first, where any thing of this poetic sporting is seen. Nor was it strange, possessing as he did such store of wit, that nothing came amiss to him in this way. No matter what the theme he chose—at once twas hit,—pun riddle crambo clench or bout-rimé. Now with his friend, perhaps, poor Doctor Sherry he'd make you rhymes to such hard words as music and he again being not one whit less merry would rhyme him back, by no means with a muse sick or then perhaps, they'd both, with greater ease than I can tell ye, juggle away the praise of charming Ballyspelly and sometimes, too the Dean and Sherry chose their playful vein of wit to exercise on poor Dan Jackson's hapless nose, which was it seems, of more than common size indeed, by all accounts it was as immensely long as that which to the man in "Tristram Shandy" did belong.

In such a mood as this it must have been that scorning the usual laws of metre the thought of

rhyming-prose first struck the Dean, and he who needed not old Ben's "St Peter" to help a line out with—as I do, by the way—at once dashed boldly off his witty *coup d'essai*. This was the piece entitled, "The Petition of Mrs Harris to the Lords' Justices," where the poor maiden prays with much submission, (in rhymes, 'twixt every two of which a long interstice is,) that they would graciously be pleased to take her very grievous case into consideration, and as her purse was stolen, that they would make, by giving her a husband, reparation, nay, if they chose, she said, so modest was her letter, she'd Dr Swift himself accept, for worse or better

If of this style you want another muster, turn to the epistle of his cook-maid Mary, who being with Dr Sheridan in wond'rous fluster, is of her Billingsgateian terms so little chary, and does so rate him, scold, and loudly bluster, that but to read it were enough to scare ye. Since then, till Cowper followed his example, I can't remember any other sample

'Tis true, some critics of our later time have followed it, but this is by *inversion*, and as those chose to write their prose in rhyme, so these turn rhyme to prose for our diversion. Whene'er they

fall on such as Wordsworth's verses critiques superfluous they scorn to write still for the good of grannies, babes, and nurses they humbly beg the choicer scraps to cite but being, they add, for want of room much pressed, and forced to squeeze their extracts very close they hope their readers will not be distressed, if they should print the verse in form of prose But here's the rub " for like the silky skein, which once entangled does all art defy so to unweave these verses back again, would puzzle ——— self were he to try Procrustes' e'en though he was *au fait*—none over more—at cutting out a length, would, at these verses, had he made essay have found the settling them beyond his strength.

But I've now written far more than enough, and must, as usual beg you to excuse my having scribbled off so much vile stuff I own I do your patience much abuse If on your cheek one little smile I raise proceeding whence I will not ask, but pleased will set it down as highest praise—at once the mood and object of my task. And now this tedious sheet to close I'll add this further merely, that I shall ever be dear Mrs **** yours very truly and sincerely

LETTER XLVIII

June 1812

You ask me what parts I found most entertaining in the King of Prussia's works. In truth, I think him cold, dry, and uninteresting, from the beginning to the end. His correspondence with Voltaire, Maupertuis, d'Alembert, and others, is in general lively, but after all is much wanting in interest. Did you ever read the letter which Horace Walpole wrote in his name to Rousseau? It is an admirable piece of wit, in the same style, but better than His Majesty could have written. As to his poetry, it is the worst of all the moderate kind—smooth versification, with now and then a smart thought, but not one *inspired* syllable—

- 3 “ His are such lays as neither ebb nor flow—
 Correctly cold, and regularly low,
 That, shunning faults, one quiet tenor keep—
 We cannot blame indeed—but we may sleep ’

His flow is that of a straight and unrippled canal no deeps and shallows intermingled—no abrupt and romantic banks—no windings, no torrents—all is, I think smooth, monotonous and stupid. Every one to his taste for me I love to see the poet with brave disorder part—and snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.” I ought perhaps to speak more respectfully for Voltaire has assigned to his Majesty—*un trône auprès d’Achille et même auprès d’Homère*—but then be it remembered, that Voltaire confessed himself the King’s *washerwoman*—the cleaner of his *sheets* and, in praising him praised himself. Besides allowances must be made, on the score of a King’s attentions yet nothing I think can justify such gross adulation as the following,—

“*Quelle est du Dieu vivant la véritable image ?
Vous, des talens, des arts, et des vertus l’appui ;
Vous, Solomon du Nord, plus savant et plus sage
Et moins foible, que lui.*”

And Voltaire could afterwards abuse his Solomon as warmly as he had flattered him ! By the way what a strange character altogether was Voltaire—how detestable and how admirable ! There are many such among the French. I am glad we have

nothing of this kind in England, or at least very little

Some of Voltaire's letters to the king are very amusing, especially those which are *parsemées* with verses, but on the whole, I would not read this long book—you will find it tedious, and you can much better employ your reading. I send two little volumes which contain almost all the anecdotes of Frederick which are entertaining

I have the pleasure to send Wool's Life of J Warton. You may find entertainment from some parts of it. His poetry is not of the very first order, but it is good. His "Enthusiast," you have probably already read, as it appeared in Dodsley's Collection. It is a fine piece of poetry, but the "Dying Indian" is by far my favourite. This is really a fine *morceau*, the lines—"And when disease—preys on her languid limbs,—then kindly stab her—with thine own hand,"—are wonderfully fine.

I like, too, Mrs J Warton's "Lines to the Memory of her Father." There is a satire on Fashion, by Dr Warton, in Dodsley's Collection, which I am surprised is not given here. Oblige me by letting this be the next book you read, as I wish

to return it to Mr S**** The little piece of Collins's is like him. It was an earnest of what he was to be—a true poet. Every thing of his breathes inspiration.

I return you the *Epître aux Femmes* of which I have taken a copy

I send you a curious thing which I have picked up in this country—the cover of a book with the autographs of Mark Akenside and Dr Barnard on it. The book to which it belongs is a learned work on Greek accents by Mr Foster of which Hermes Harris speaks, p 285 Life of Warton. Dr Barnard's particular interest in it is, that he was a friend of the author's, who has made honourable mention of him in his Preface

I send the cover alone as it is detached from the book, which is only full of Greek and Latin. Dr Barnard, if I remember rightly signed the round robin to Johnson about Goldsmith's epitaph. Of this a fac simile is given in Boswell. I shall therefore be obliged to you to compare and tell me whether the two signatures are alike I shall hunt—and make no doubt of finding Akenside's, somewhere else

Oblige me by giving to the bearer Madamo du

Deffand, or any thing else you may deem entertaining, for I have no books left on my table, and have for some days been obliged to resort to old *Reviews and Magazines* I believe you have some poems of Mrs Hunter's—or are “Euler's Letters” lying idle?—or, in short, any thing

Mr W*****, whose taste you know is orthodox and infallible, has been pleased highly to commend the chessmen,—and *à-propos* of approving, Captain A***** asked me whether I was the writer of the “Criticism on a passage in St John,”* and expressed great satisfaction at my having cleared away an expression which had always appeared to him harsh and inconsistent Scott, it seems, had taken the translation as it stands, on trust, and making the most of a bad bargain, endeavoured to argue away any seeming impropriety It is strange—I have looked into every commentator, and not one has detected this flagrant mistranslation of so striking a passage

Scott has much that is excellent, but I cannot be brought over to his particular tenets I detest Calvin, if only for burning Servetus—cannot but think with St James of good works—and cannot in

* The paper was published in the “Indian Reminiscences”

any way reconcile to myself the understanding Election in the widely-extended sense they receive it. I fully admit Prescience—but theirs altogether annihilates free-agency and is as bad as Mahomedan fatality. On this point I think even the Articles are incautiously worded and what they pronounce to be a ' dangerous doctrine ' ought to have received their censure. But I am wandering away à l'ordinaire.

Perhaps I ought to apologise for troubling you with this just now—but you must I know read at all times. Consider this therefore as part of some stupid book—and it is all over. Read and throw it away as a silly thing—and then turn with increased zest to something more entertaining

LETTER XLIX

June 1812

THE accompanying letters explain themselves I have said what I think of Mr S****'s verses—they are extremely beautiful and very harmonious

I sent the Latin lines I had written, to him. But though I would not affront Mr S**** by giving him a translation, it will be no affront to you The following is literal —“ May the earth lie lightly on thy breast! for, M****, thou hast not left behind a more learned man than thyself! This also let thy shade know, that though thy bones rest here, thou thyself wilt always remain buried in our hearts!”

There is no very great stretch of thought in this, but I was obliged to study the genius of the language in which I wrote, and aimed more at simplicity than any thing else I *must* add, by the way, that the turn of expression is much prettier

in Latin. I hope you won't think me vain when I say that I am very well satisfied with this attempt. Judging impartially I think them very tolerable lines. Now don't laugh at me for my vanity

Poor M****! I have thought of nothing else. He died of an abscess in his liver I have not yet heard from Rungpore

You wish me to put my Latin attempt into the "Mirror" and if only because a wish of yours, I may be tempted to do this but not immediately Latin verses are of too ticklish a nature to hurry me. I must first get them well examined, and critically looked over—for to be afterwards detected in a false quantity would most cruelly annoy me. Poor M***** dashed off his Latin verses—and what was the consequence? Three or four false quantities—false concords—and one word not Latin! He was laughed at by all who understood Latin. I must take warning by this. Indeed, as a proof that it is necessary I have discovered myself that in my haste I have already committed one error

It is not probable that you took a copy of Latin but if you did alter Marsi into Marses. They are equally good grammar but differ in quantity. Unfortunately there is not a single person I know

at Moorshedabad who can help me in this Mr C***** is *of course* a scholar, but I do not know him well enough to ask him to take for me a school-master's office

I have been thinking again, (indeed he has had my entire thoughts,) on the subject of his Epitaph This tribute of respect *must* be paid to him—and I know not who there is to pay it Dr T*** is, I conclude, a Latin scholar, and able to perform the work—but of this I know nothing certainly, and there is no other at Rungpore that can attempt it

As I observed to Mr S****, this is a species of writing that more than any other requires a consummate knowledge of the language, and I know how utterly incompetent is mine, yet I mean to send off the inclosed as an offering If any other be received I shall be well pleased, and if not, mine, though poor, will be more respectful than none The grave-stone is not the place to tell an untruth on, and I could not therefore dwell on that subject I should have been most pleased to do He had, I hope, more religious feeling than he expressed, (I think he had)

Tell me whether you think this will do—or if enough or too much is said? Dr Johnson says

the tomb-stone should always convey a moral. I know not what other to draw from his life than that, how regretful that such talents should have produced no fruit. Pray do criticise any thing you do not like.

Oblige me by telling D*** that the river has ceased to rise not, however till it *touched* my plant, and threw me into the greatest apprehensions, from which I am scarcely yet relieved. I have been most unfortunate but, alas! there is no remedy!

LETTER I

June 1812

As you do not think he would be displeased with it, I will ask Mr C*****'s opinion of the Latin of my Epitaph on poor M****, when I see him next I wish to be with him at the time, to give any explanations that may be necessary, and by myself, I judge he would criticise more freely verbally than in a letter. In writing one must give all the reasons *pro* and *con*, but one may like or dislike, without being exactly able to assign any, and in speaking can say—"I dislike such a word, because—I don't like it" These, too, are the most serious points—for this is the common way of judging those parts that depend on taste—the nicer touches that one rather feels than reasons on

Do not think I mean to say my attempt particularly requires such judgment, I am now speaking in generalisms I have written to-day to R*****,

inclosing it, and desiring him first to sound well, and press, if necessary his uncle or any other and not to show mine to any one till he is sure no one else will write

Mr Manning may have returned and, as he is a first-rate scholar any thing from his pen will be valuable. But they say he is nearly as indolent as poor M**** was—in which case nothing can be expected from him.

By the way I am rejoiced that you think with me that poor M****'s expressed scepticism was in a great measure an affectation of *bel-espritism*. His dwelling so much on his unbelief seemed to me, like the boasting of a coward, to prove the very reverse. Implication, however is not the most satisfactory kind of proof and I shall be rejoiced to hear he gave any other—nor shall I be surprised.

I never read Sherlock's Letters. If you have them I will do so at some future time but the seeing the King of Prussia's character *rescued* will be no inducement. I wish not to entertain any other opinion of him than my present one which is, I own, unfavourable enough—for I look on him to be an unamiable little-minded capricious and tyrannical *bel-esprit* or modern philosopher than

which I know not a more contemptible term. I cannot bear to hear him called "the Great." He had, it is true, a smattering of *French savantism*—the worst of all kinds!—and sometimes did things which looked great, but the want of consistency proved that these were an affectation—all complete stage-trick. His strokes of brilliancy and generosity were, in short, to use a theatrical term—mere clap-traps.

His military talents are quite another affair. There cannot be two opinions about the excellency of them. *A-propos* of "the Great," one of the African kings calls himself "great King," "great Warrior," "great Thief"—thus is at least being honest.

What a slovenly insertion is this in the "Mirror!" The 13th could not have been the date. I was quite in a passion when I read it. Some one at Rungpore ought, at least, to have paid the compliment to his memory of a well-written paragraph. These things are not of consequence, but they show a negligence which I hate. Thus, Warren Hastings' first wife is buried in the old Cossimbazar burying-ground—some of the figures are left blank—and thus

alone proves, I think that he had no regard for her nor does it appear that he had.

By the by I received some very handsome compliments from poor M**** about a month ago, and thus in the most pleasing indirect way—in a note to — who sent it to my father who gave it to me. Gratitude therefore, is an additional inducement for liking him but no addition was necessary

The river is just now falling and it certainly will not rise again till the new moon and Mr R**** (the director of the embankments) gives me hopes that not even then. In the mean time I have nothing to do here and may therefore follow my inclination, which will lead me to Calcutta on the 3d. Pray do not listen to the doctor should he urge a longer confinement even to the 4th you will have exceeded the month by twelve days, and you ought to keep your word.

I have not heard again from — It appears he does not understand Latin, and it may therefore have appeared pedantical in me to have written any to him but I had reasons for thinking he did know it. First, because he comes from Winchester which generally turns out particularly good classics

secondly, because he is a pupil of Dr Warton's, thirdly, because he has spoken to me (in general terms it is true) of Latin poets, and fourthly and chiefly, because he placed a quotation from Horace as a motto to his "Lines on ——" Here were sufficient reasons to acquit me. Of course I will never dwell on this subject with him again. A long dry letter *à l'ordinaire*.

LETTER LI.

July 1812

I HAD determined that my next species of troubling you should have been personal but this abominable river will not, perhaps allow me to do what I wish. It is all *uncertainty—most annoying uncertainty!* I am glad Mr B*** saw my Latin lines, and am much flattered by his approval of them he is I believe a very good scholar I should, however have thought more highly of his knowledge had he perceived the reason of the alteration I made. It was not a matter of taste but of positive necessity The verse as it first stood, was a false one. As however the fault consisted in not observing an almost solitary exception to an extremely general rule his ear is not to be much blamed for having not detected it—nor is mine for having first

committed it. Fortunately, I corrected myself in time. I am sorry Mr B*** is gone, as I should have liked much to have seen him.

I have at length heard from Rungpore; but as the greater part of the letter will, I think, be interesting to you, I send it altogether.

The farewell note is of a strange affecting wildness, but still like poor M****. The whole detail is very melancholy. I should like to see what he wrote to Mr R*****. I have desired R***** not to make a *selection* of the poetical scraps, but to copy for me *all* that he found.

There is one word not very legible in the note. It is, I think, "rac," and alludes, I suspect, to the rhyming contests which took place at their club, some time ago, between M**** and Manning, on the word "rack."

Have you yet seen Mr W B****? I thought him, when last here, a very pleasant man, and hope he may stay till September, as I shall have no opportunity of seeing him earlier. I am, I believe, almost equal with him in chess-account—but I forget. You must take care not to lose your play. I hope you are gaining strength faster than you were, and can say you are quite well, but you were evi-

dently very very far from it when I had last the pleasure of seeing you.

Many thanks for the books. The *volunteer* corps of the Jews which you mention is ridiculous enough almost as much so as Buonaparte's *Dutch light infantry*. Frederick was obliged to use all his force and even then it sat ill upon them—he could not succeed. Look to the Prince de Ligne for a most humorous account of the appearance of this corps of Jewish cavalry. It made me laugh

LETTER LII

July 1812

I AM very sorry to hear that you again feel unwell, but this must, I hope, be soon over. You deserve the greatest credit for the admirable manner in which you have borne so very severe a trial, and you have your reward—for a placid mind always contains its own

The river has continued, and is continuing to rise, if it goes on doing so, as is probable, I must begin my campaign on the 6th. In the intermediate time, of course a thousand things will require my attention, and indeed, as a sudden swell may oblige me to begin yet sooner, I must be on the spot to watch every turn. Consequently, this abominable river obliges me to forego the pleasure I had expected to enjoy on the 4th—that of seeing you. This is, to me, not the least provoking part of the annoy-

ance it gives me. It will oblige me to cut much plant before it is sufficiently ripe and much plant too I must expect that it will sweep away altogether before it is in the least fit to be cut.

I feel, in full force the truth of your lines—

“ How oft an heavy cloud, with gloom o’erspread,
Mars the fair prospect of a summer’s day—
Thus clothed in doubts, Suspense, with horrors dread,
Kills trembling Hope, and curses with delay

Ten or fifteen days delay in the rise of the river and all had been well. This anxiety keeps my mind in a constant ferment and I am almost sure that a narrow inspection would prove a few *grey hairs* to have started up from this continual fretting of the last three months

After once beginning to work I can never leave this factory for twenty four hours together till I stop but I can very well contrive to find a vacant space of more than twelve and I am too fond of pleasure not to obtain it if I can. I intend therefore immediately my working days are established in fair train, to pay a short visit to Calcapore

I am glad my astronomical simile made you laugh. Ah what a pity these are not the days of Waller! What a hundred compliments he would

have paid Saccharissa on such an occasion ! I can conceive one precisely in his style—

“ Astronomers thus have I known,
 Dejected, fearful gaze,
 As Venus’ orb no longer shone,—
 O’er Mercury, in transit thrown,
 Absorb’d were all her rays

“ But as a passing cloud, as ’twere,
 Doth only snuff the light,
 So Venus doth emerge more fair,
 Which I to piece of cloth compare,
 By fuller’s earth made bright ”

I intended only one *conceit* as a muster, but my pen ran into three, however, Waller would have strung fifty such for you. Recollect I am not accountable for these; they are merely given as a specimen of what Dr Johnson called “ the metaphysical poetry.” That I have fallen far short, you may see, in the following astronomical simile of Donne’s, which you may try to understand, if you can.—

"Then, let this truth reciprocally run—

The sun is heaven's coalery and coals our sun."

If you want a curiosity in the sonnet way—look in Milton's works, sonnet x. or xi. which will amuse you from its uncouth rhymes. It begins—

"A book was writ of late, called Tetrachordon."

But I am as bad as any one of these metaphysical gentlemen in wandering away into a thousand subjects.

I have just begun Euler His arrangement seems extremely lucid, and his manner of expressing himself very clear but his doctrine of light which I am at present engaged in is entirely false He has attacked Newton, but completely fails. But more of this, perhaps to trouble you at some future time

LETTER LIII

July 1812

I RETURN Mrs Hunter's Poems, and the first volume of Euler D*** likes news I, therefore, give him my collection of this morning At a place called Coulan in Travancore, the native troops concerted a plan to massacre all their officers These gentlemen were, it seems, to have been assembled at some dinner-party on the 22d ult, at which time the Sipahces, surrounding the house, were first to have fired a volley, and then rushed in and put to the bayonet all who escaped their shot

On the 20th, one of the conspirators gave information, and measures of security were immediately taken Three ringleaders from among the soldiers, and a faqeer, were shot off from the mouth of cannon, and two hundred Sipahces, next in guilt, were put in arrest Nothing further is known

The Commander-in-chief was at Chandernagore

on the 4th There is a business, too about a proposal of Captain G*** to Government, to embody native-born young men into corps. I have seen his letter and one on the subject from Colonel G***** but they are too long to write about.

I did not see Mr C***** but may do so before to-day is over as I dine with both the Generals—one at four the other half past seven. The 25th regiment are expected to-morrow by the General—by the General, I mean however General P***** The other never has any news.

LETTER LIV.

July 1812

I HAVE given you a long truce , but I knew you were getting better every day, and that you were occupied with Europe letters , I cannot, however, restrain my pen any longer.

I send the set of chessmen, which I hope you will like—the price is thirty-two rupees

A sad accident has happened to my lottery ticket I told you it was a lucky number, and I thought it was according to all the rules of *figuromancy* Three is, you know, considered as peculiarly fortunate, and all that are divisible by it partake of its qualities , but the square of three or nine is the grand number , and all are pre-eminently lucky that can be divided by it without a remainder. The square of nine again, or eighty-one, is, however, still better if possible—it is of the very last importance , and my supposed number 1782, is

exactly divisible by that—the possessor of it is *almost* sure of the *lac*. But alas! it will not be I—mine is most unfortunately 1732 the sum of which four figures is *thirteen* which, I need not observe is the most unlucky wight in the whole numeration table. If there be any truth in the art of augury it cannot fail to be a blank, for it is neither divisible by three, seven or nine—figures which are always lucky except in one instance—namely *sixty-three*, and they are then the reverse, because the powers of seven and nine contend in it for mastery and so strongly do they clash, that this number is you know called the grand climacteric—the trying year of life. But enough of this—I must refer you for further particulars to the Rosicrucian black letter gentry

My Rungpore correspondents treat me with sovereign contempt—the eloquence of *silence*. I wrote in the last month begging a speedy answer and I have not yet received it *Nimporte*. I could not wait longer without being too late for the *Mirror* and therefore sent it off. I have not seen the last one and do not therefore know whether ——— verses have appeared or not—but of course they have

Send me back the *notes* on Euler when you have ran over them I did not at first mean these for you The fact is, when I read a book, I am apt to get *warm* in the passages I do not like, and I vent my anger in scribbling This was the case here The remarks I make I generally tear up at cooler moments, or sew them into my common-place packet I ventured to send you these, because, on reading it over, I liked the introduction of the Brahmin, and thought the whole might amuse you; but I confess I had not *myself* patience to copy it, and correct all its tautology With you I have "toute haute vue" I am not afraid to show my stupidest scrawls—for you receive them always indulgently

I have not yet begun the second volume, but I do not mean to trespass too far on your patience, and have firmly resolved in advance, not to trouble you with a single line about it

Towards the end of the first volume Euler gives the nineteen forms of logic in one page; but he represents them by the letters, A, B, C, &c. Now I want you very much to exemplify them, and substitute proper pieces of reasoning in the place of these letters It will be a pleasant way of im-

pressing the whole on your mind, and will take very little time. You must not refuse—an hour's attention will be enough.

I have, within half a volume finished *Madame du Deffand*, but I read it slowly. There is a good deal of entertaining anecdote altogether but it is very widely dispersed and there is a good deal of wading through frivolous and unentertaining parts to get at the brighter spots. I do not think you would like it the lady is always complaining of being *ennuyée* and her lamentations on this subject are so tedious that I feel inclined to give her the additional credit of being an *ennuyeuse*. I should have finished these sooner but I cannot confine myself to one reading without a great exertion and I brought from Calcapore a great many books, which have divided my attention.

I did not, you told me, send you a copy of my additional lines I now therefore do so. I have prefixed —— a first twelve as this was the original state. For the others I will wait till I see what criticisms Rungpore may afford—that is, if they have not cut me altogether. I can't help it if they have.

LETTER LV

July 1812

THE mistakes in the "Mirror" are certainly very provoking. It is too bad of Mr B**** not to publish exactly what he receives. He will, perhaps, serve my contribution in the same way, (that is, if he publish it at all,) for I too, like Mr —, have written only a B in the name. Thus lengthening a contraction is very wrong. The mistakes occasioned by it here were natural enough, but it sometimes leads to very ridiculous ones. For instance an Italian book of little stories or novellas, was divided into decades. One of them was headed thus—"Dec ix nov vi." The English printer chose to take this for the date, and accordingly unfolded it into "December 9th, November 6th!" Another, in making out the catalogue of his shop for Cicero's works—"M T Ciceronis Opera"—treated poor Marcus Tullius thus—"Mr Thomas Cicero's

Opus !! *A propos* of a mistake somewhat like this. Did I ever tell you of a gentleman who looking at the outside of my Marmontel, and seeing

Contes Moraux on it, very seriously asked me whether this *Count* was any relation of the great *Moreau* s? My scribblings on Euler you may keep as long as you please—but do not let them stir out of the drawer. You are very kind in what you say but still I will not tax your patience with any further remarks on him. You have much better to do than to read them—and I must not verify the proverb about the inch. I congratulate you on your Europe letters. I have not yet received any, which is extremely annoying—but I must be patient. I like very much your sentiments on the King of Prussia. I wish a sudden fit of indignation had made you throw him out of the window—it would have been excellent—though certainly your dislike needs not quite so strong a proof. The incessant flattery is indeed disgusting. From Voltaire and d'Alembert it is not quite so wearisome as they contrived to garnish it with a little wit, and compensate the extravagance by well-turned expressions but still it was what Johnson calls gilding a rotten post. How different was this great *Sage* s

conduct he would not, he said, “bandy compliments with his sovereign” I am very glad no Englishmen were admitted to the honour of administering this incense Poor M J’s vocabulary of flattering terms is, as you observe, quite worn out, and he had not exactly the art of “exhausting worlds and then creating new” But who, indeed, could have kept pace with such an insatiable glutton of praise whose relish was grown so completely callous, that “who peppered the highest was sure to please?” I was, equally with you, “outré d’entendre toujours chanter—Ah! combien monseigneur doit être content de lui-même!” Voltaire, who wrote this, ought consequently to have avoided producing the effect Frederick certainly expresses himself more blasphemously, if possible, than Voltaire, but, having so infinitely less talent, was not a thousandth part so mischievous I do detest them both cordially You will see an admirable letter on this subject from the President Hérault to Voltaire in Madame du Deffand, vol iv p 77 I like it very much There is a turn, far inferior to, but somewhat like Beattie in it There is, too, an entertaining letter of quite the opposite kind in vol. ii p 501, from Frederick, about the Jesuits Read

these, and tell me how you like the President's I forget exactly where I read Algarotti's letters but I have met with them frequently I thought they had been in the King of Prussia's works. The argument about Necessity I do not remember but Voltaire's shifting or unsaying himself is just like him. This was the *consistency* of his character—in inconstancy he *was* ever constant, and always rigidly firm in the meanest suppleness. There are several anecdotes in Madame du Deffand of him that give additional proofs of his horrible despicableness. By the way the strange mysterious character of the Prince which you spoke of in your last letter is generally supposed to be the original of Schiller's Prince in the *Armenian*, —the incidents of course fictitious. He was known to be greatly attached to the Illuminati. Pray write me what further occurs to you in these works I return with many thanks the *Irish Students and Madame du Deffand's Letters*." I cannot say I like the first at all. The style is very dull and the anecdotes almost all old, and almost all twisted in the telling I scarcely met with one that I had not met with before.

Southey's *Espriolla's Letters* are widely dif

ferent—the contents nearly entirely original, and extremely well written. This is apparently a work produced by poor Sir Richard Phillips's patronage. Another time I will attend to your judgment more. You said you did not think I should like it. The article about ladies in England stealing lace I do not believe—and that a remuneration for this is levied by making all the fashionables pay an equal share each—which is inserted in their bills—"To et-ceteras"—is an absurd falsehood. What lady would submit to such a charge?

Almost the only articles I have not seen in other works or magazines are the story about "*live France*," the bedridden murder, and the conduct of Anacreon Moore and Jeffery before their duel. All about Dr Walcott and Opie are taken from the Life of the latter, and all in some degree spoiled. Madame du Defland has afforded me a great deal of entertainment. There are a number of witty anecdotes, epigrams, &c, but I would hardly recommend your wading through them—for according to the proverb, "*le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*," it will scarcely reward your pains. Horace Walpole has a great love for "*les noms propres*," and, consequently, Madame du D gives long tiresome

details to amuse him, naming for instance every one she may chance to sup with. She would have been a very excellent correspondent if the gentleman had permitted but he represses all her vivacity and indeed behaves to her in the rudest most churlish, and most disheartening manner. This correspondence shows him in an extremely unamiable light—for instance (and all his letters are of the same stamp) read the notes to pp 45 and 498 of vol. II. Can any thing be more impolite nay cruel, than to treat thus a respectable lady of eighty who felt for him the warmest friendship? She was very mean I think in not resenting such affronts. Once only she writes a very spirited remonstrance—pray read it—it is p 368 of vol II. Yet in the next letter she most weakly relaxes again. I was a hundred times out of all patience with this disgusting peevishness—this chilling want of regard—in Horace Walpole. His pen is very justly said by Madame du Deffand to be *de fer trempé dans le fiel*. Yet, this one subject apart he writes I think admirably and I am very sorry his letters were not also published. He thinks things and expresses himself forcibly and elegantly. In vol. II. p 195 you will see Madame du D's opinion of

Lord Minto, it is flattering enough. In Fox's character she is strangely mistaken. She thinks very meanly of him, and even in one place, p. 219 of the same volume, hints a suspicion that he may open a letter of hers entrusted to his care! There are many other parts that would amuse you. You may as well look it over at your leisure. I am very sorry to hear that you do not regain strength so fast as you expected—but "slow and sure," I hope. Do not fatigue yourself by returning your visits too soon. Pray, be prudent and nurse yourself well, for a great many people's sakes. Your morning visitors are, I suspect, too much for you. I am glad I am not in Calcutta. I should not be able to exert the self-denial of staying away, and should consequently have to reproach myself for a part of your headaches. Even now I have a share in producing them—but letters are less than long tiresome visits. You will, I hope, with this fine weather, gain strength faster, but again, take very great care of yourself—you must on no account think of being unwell again. I hope your next letter will tell me that you have formed this resolution, pray, adhere to it strongly. I have determined never to

trouble you with more than *one* sheet at a time so
I economize in the size of my writing

P S —I enclose a translation of the sentiments of
a Hindoo sage I hope you will like it.

LETTER LVI

July 1842

Of course, make what extracts you please from R*****'s letter, and keep it as long as you choose. It is not even necessary to ask—for with any papers of mine you are always welcome to do as you like. I was sure poor M*****'s note would affect you. Your mother will be much grieved to hear of the death of so old a friend, though length of acquaintance was not necessary to make him regretted.

I am glad you agree with me in applying R*****'s opinion to the four English lines. I have referred him in such case to my prior letter, where he will see I did not assume the credit of them. You must tell me if you have heard any criticisms on either—though newspaper effusions are generally considered as below criticism, except by brother newspaperites, and the subject will, of course, save me from any attack from them.

You think my Hindoo sage a little obscure in the

two first lines but these are the most characteristic—philosophically considering as he does, this world to be only an ordeal—a passage—a vale of tears—the pleasures of which act as so many clogs to the soul and prevent it from soaring to and dwelling in the thoughts of an after life. He prays that his views towards heaven may not be arrested by knowing that there is any thing pleasant upon earth that he may not be shackled by any attachments in it which might make him regret quitting life. This is the true spirit of the old ascetics, who considered any thing but severe mortification as polluting them. But in the next lines he very beautifully I think, changes the train of thought exclaiming that if nevertheless he should fall into pleasure—so well aware is he of its exquisite delights—that he would give himself entirely up to it, and would desire to live no longer than its joys lasted. The transition here from the rigid sternness of the Stoic to the acute sensibility of the Epicurean is what I admire most. I think there is great originality in it.

I am glad my anecdotes pleased you. Since ——— chooses to give me the credit of one of them I must not contradict him. The made-up story of Vol-

taire's dying horrors was ridiculous, for the real account of it could not but be notorious, as he died as much in public as he had lived. Madame du Deffand, who was with him constantly, says there was nothing in the least particular in it—that he died precisely as he had lived, occupying himself with the business and talk of the moment, and quite indifferent to all hereafter.

It is certain, however, that he wrote a very orthodox confession of faith a little before his death (A copy of it is in Madame du Deffand.) The priest who obtained it from him was the same who had converted the profligate Abbé l'Attaignant, and was at the same time chaplain to the Hospital of *Incurables*—of course, fine food for epigrams. This confession, however, proves nothing but that Voltaire was altogether inconsistent, and a gleam of religion in an inconsistent character is perhaps more mischievous than the darkness of one entirely reprobate, for it makes us gloss over the great ill for the sake of the little good. I hate these dangerous mixed characters. A trait of beneficence in Frederick, or of religion in Voltaire, may make us forget the tyranny of the one, or the blasphemy of the other. I prefer them in all their natural deformity, for

vice to be hated, needs but to be seen. The mask only is dangerous.

I have been reading an interesting little book of Captam A*****s, called A World without Souls. It is, I think, very well written but the argument is not quite fair in all parts for instance a clergyman of the Establishment is introduced with prefacing that he had passed the university &c., with credit and then commonplace silly observations, or unfair concessions, are put into his mouth which of course the gospel gentleman triumphantly conquers. This is not fair play But I will not enter into a dry controversy you would not thank me for the discussion.

I shall be much obliged to you to lend me Literary Memoirs, Potter's Euripides, and Kinderley's Hindoo Literature" I am very troublesome to you in this way If you will give the books to the bearer I have directed him to wrap them up carefully in wax-cloth and bring them to me with due precaution against sun and rain. Oblige me by adding to them the Travels of Abu Talib" which I never completely read. I have run out my stock here and I have only fifty pages of Euler to save me from magazines.

LETTER LVII

July 1812

I RECEIVED the books safely a few days ago, and am much obliged to you for them. Your letter I was favoured with yesterday. Negative criticisms are certainly very provoking, but they save, you know, the labour of *thinking*—or at least, of explaining the thought. With regard to my Hindoo sage's philosophy, I do think on the subject exactly what you have written.

Old Campo says he has exhausted the last supply of books, and is clamorous for more. Those last sent will be delivered in a few days at Putkabar, and he wants another parcel to be sent there, to be in readiness for his people to take up to him. Mr Campo is quite a literary gourmand, and seems to have, as Milton says, "an insatiable maw." We must not, however, let the good old gentleman die for want of food. I propose sending

about twenty volumes and if you will contribute about twelve or fifteen of any travels, this will be an ample treat to him I give you trouble enough on my own account, but this for Campo I know you will not grudge.

I return Euler and have kept to my word of not scribbling about it though I was sadly tempted to make the system of *smelling* conform to his accounts of music and colours, and depend upon the wonderful agency of his ether

A very ludicrous parallel might be drawn between them, and an *olfactory pianoforte* proposed, in which Rosewater for instance might be note A its ascending octave Essence and the octave to that again Utr of Roses the fifth to it might be a decoction of Violets and so on through a whole system of aromatic harmony The keys to produce these *notes* might act in opening and shutting the stoppers of a range of small bottles the contents of which should be made as *volatile* as possible and in this way I have no doubt but tunes corresponding to "God save the King" &c. might be played with great delight to the nasal organs.

Our nomenclature of smells, too would be greatly improved. Thus we might say of a nosegay that

it was in delightful unison—of a *cocooney*, that it is horrible discord—or of a musk-rat, that it is terribly out of tune. But for *once* I would not let my pen run away with me

You will find parts of this volume entertaining. Electricity and magnetism he treats of very clearly, but, in the first, he chooses to call the electric fluid *ether*. This, however, does not injure the description of its phenomena. The part on telescopes you will, I think, find dry—there being so much of the mathematical form in it. The book does not seem to be complete. In page 350 he proposes to speak of compound microscopes, when his digression on telescopes is over, but he does not, and the digression nearly closes the book.

Several grand branches of natural philosophy he almost entirely omits to treat of—as pneumatics and hydrostatics

I return Mr W*****'s sketch, which gives a very good idea of “Callenjar”. How very strong it appears to be! it is wonderful that we could surmount such difficulties. Pray remember me to Mr W***** in your letters

Captain H***** scarcely ever writes to me now. From Mr W***** I get *delightful* letters,

but not very frequent. I have another correspondent at Patna that I believe you do not know Major — a most eccentric genius, but who seldom talks to me but of the creation of the world Irish and Sanscrit etymologies, and such matters. Of his letters on an average about one-twentieth part is intelligible but a specimen might amuse you. I take one at hazard. The *unravelling* his meaning is a work of no slight labour but I find much entertainment in it, and write pretty regularly to him.

The river which has been stationary for a few days, has now commenced its last grand rise, and I shall therefore have no cessation of being busy with it until the end of the season. Excuse this terrible scrawl—it is even worse than ordinary.

LETTER LVIII

August 2, 1812

I WAS much obliged to you for the books Old Campo will have quite a feast, of which Miss Edgeworth's "Ennui" would, in my opinion, be the *bonne-bouche*, though he may perhaps prefer Rousseau's work. If so, it will be entirely for the name's sake, for, as far as I have dipped into it, it is quite uninteresting, but he is a stanch disciple of the Geneva philosopher.

I am glad you approve of my *olfactory* idea. The utmost, however, I thought of attempting was an essay on it in Euler's style—but that is past. Your opinion that it has poetic capabilities is, I think, very just, but it is that kind of subject whose capabilities I perfectly know I could not bring into action. It requires a Darwinian imagination, and a Darwinian pen, to do it justice. To sing the charms of aroma in its proper "tetran-

dria monogynian strains I will not try for I am sure I could not write one good syllable on it. But the idea may certainly as you observe be made much of. It is fanciful, and susceptible of great poetic nicety. For me there is one obstacle I could not surmount. My ideas are already in a train from which I could not turn them, and which is unsuitable to the poetic way of considering the subject. I should be flying off every moment to attack the system of *ether* and be falling I know into the ludicrous which is not what the theme would require.

Did I ever tell you *not* a *first-rate* pun of Colonel S*****s on chess? We were talking of the etymology of the Persian word *shutrun*g. Why look at the board, said he it explains itself—you see it's a *set-o ranges*. And now I am on the subject of puns, I must tell you another. The Peace of Amiens was the subject of conversation. Some one making use of a metaphor from chess, observed, that Addington certainly gave the French a move by it. Nay" said some one else he did more, he gave them a *piece*. I forget who was the punster—nor is it worth recollecting.

I have got down the "Novice of St Dominick"

from Rungpore, and will send it to you when the parcels from Putkabarry arrive. Some old English books are also coming—but you do not care about *black letter*. Indeed, essays on witchcraft, which they are, are generally very dry, and possess neither characteristical charms nor *fascinations*, but it is curious to read the positive and ridiculous assertions about conversations between *hags* and *imps*, &c—some of them sworn, too, before magistrates! Did you ever go through any of these? though they are scarcely worth it, and are, in general, sad trash. In one of them a whole tribe of devils are actually subpoenaed as witnesses!!

In the account of your party, you told me you played at puzzles. As you are very *au-fait* at these, I must give you a paradox to solve—Two persons were born at the same place at the same moment of time. After an age of fifty years, they both died also at the same spot, and in the same instant—yet one had lived a hundred days more than the other—how was this possible? I mean no quibble. Excuse all this nonsense.

¶ I shall not be able to come in on the 6th, as I shall then be very busy here. The river has been very ruinous to me already, and cannot but con-

time so My sowings were so unfortunately late from the want of rain that when the river began to rise the plant nearest the water was not above half ripe—yet I was obliged to cut it and thus on. I have stopped for ten days, but that delay is not sufficient, and I cannot lengthen it—the river has obliged me to begin again. In short, I hope to clear myself but I cannot think of any profit A year therefore will be lost to me—a very serious loss! But this to me is a melancholy theme I brood over it sufficiently in my thoughts and must not trouble you with my gloomy ideas. I am rejoiced that they are well off in Rungpora.

LETTER LIX

August 1812

I AM very sorry you have been so disappointed in Europe letters. I am happy to say I have received a few, which tell me that my mother and sisters are all well. One of them speaks of coming out here. I hope very much she may, but I scarcely expect it, as I know the difficulty in prevailing on my mother to part with one of her children. The most particular details I have from a good old housekeeper that I regularly correspond with. It is not very easy to decipher her letters, but they are vastly entertaining to *me*—the slip-sloppery, almost as bad as Mrs Winifred Jenkins's. Thus, in enumerating my sisters' occupations, she tells me of one, "have paint a munta." Who would not suppose this to be some shepherdess? By what follows, however, it turns out to be *a miniature* of herself that my sister has done for her.

I must allow Colonel S***** *a pun* to be indifferent. I do not know how I came to write it to you, unless that my thoughts were just then occupied in hunting out the real etymology of the word for I have for some time past, been so vexed and occupied, that I had neither time nor inclination for any thing like regular reading and more to distract myself than for any other purpose filled the few leisure moments I could snatch, in making notes of what had been said on this game by various authors. These when my head is more disengaged, and in a fitter state I will throw together into some kind of form to amuse you with if I can.

At present without being poetical, I may say of my mind Chaos is come again indeed all my prospects destroyed before my eyes, is enough to make me melancholy—not to brood over them is a vain effort but even hope is gone. Nearly all my plant is irrecoverably drowned and I have the certainty of an extremely bad season. This last stroke was so sudden and so complete that it quite overwhelmed the little stock of patience I had remaining and I could almost have thrown myself after my plant with vexation but I must be resigned. Your condolence must always be an

alleviation, and again I thank you sincerely for it

But I must write on other subjects The reformation of the kalendar has nothing to do with my paradox, nor leap-years, nor any thing else of the kind. To be clearer one saw the sun rise and set a hundred times oftener than the other, but it is hardly worth solving—so let it remain till I have the pleasure of seeing you.

The books from Rungpore are not yet arrived I will send the “Novice” immediately it comes It is, I think, Miss Owenson’s best work

Your account of chess is not so good as it ought to be Hard battles, in which you only come off with a game or two, are not sufficient Pray, take care to keep up *your* credit I thank you for the note to —, but it does not in the least answer to the description Mr R***** gave me of it The other was very wild, but very affecting Thus—but I need not write about it—it is not like him

Do you keep to your intention of going to Calcutta next month? Not in the early part of it, I hope My father writes me that Moorshedabad is very gay The *Club*, he says, is become particu-

larly the fashion and that bachelors give dinners at it. I am so gloomy that I do not regret not being at them but I do regret the morning parties you speak of

The Eve of San Pietro I lately sent to Rung pore. I did not previously read it but, on turning it over perceived a leaf turned down I conclude by you. The pendent tripods mentioned in it is evidently a plagiarism, rather unhappy from Mrs Radcliffe. The corresponding one in her is in the Venetian palace of the Mysteries of Udolpho. You did not tell me of this, and I perceived your mark but by accident. I shall read it on its return.

Potter & Euripides I borrowed merely to hunt for a note on the Medea, where there is a passage some have chosen to think relative to chess but he has translated it dice which is just. In Woodhull's translation there is a long remark, something similar to what I had hoped to find here but nothing is said. The sight of my old school friend, however pleased me so much that I shall not return it until I have gone quite through it

If you meet in your reading with any passages about this game pray communicate them to me as

I want to collect all , but, before I trouble you to make an extract, just write the-head, that I may see whether I have it not already. Do not trouble yourself about this—I only want what falls in your way

LETTER LX.

August 1812.

I AM very grateful to you for the kindness of your wishes. On the article of *health*, I am tolerably well again but for my *prospects*—they're past for this year! I must take courage and begin again. I have been unwell about a week—for one or two days rather severely but I have taken care and got over it. I attribute it to the very bad weather we had some little time ago. Being obliged to be out from morning till night, I could not help being constantly wet through—it being useless to think of changing a dozen times a-day. Thus with perhaps fretting a little more than I ought, laid me up but I have come off cheaply—being now tolerably well again. For your kind wishes I thank you very very much.)

My father's letters must be different from mine or I do not think he has any right to expect my

sister so soon. I do not expect her, at the earliest, before the February or March fleet of 1813—that is, a year hence, and so much may happen in a year, that I am not very sanguine in my expectation of seeing her here at all. I hope very much she may come.

Never mind the anecdotes of chess. It was a floating idea which I may never carry into execution. The solution of the paradox turns on a curious, but, with a little reflection, a very obvious point in circumnavigation. A person going round the world, towards the west, *loses a day*, and towards the east, he *gains one*. Thus Magellan's ship, on its return to Seville, found what they thought the 6th of September, to be considered as the 7th by the Sevillians, and this, if you consider that in travelling from the sun you lengthen the day, cannot be otherwise. Supposing, then, two persons born together at the Cape of Good Hope, whence a voyage round the world may be performed in a year, if one perform this constantly towards the west, in fifty years he will be fifty days behind the stationary inhabitants. And, if the other sail equally towards the east, he will be fifty days in advance of them. One, therefore, will have seen a hundred days more

than the other though they were born and died in the same place—at the same moments—and lived even continually in the same latitudes, and reckoned by the same kalendar. A moment's thought will convince you of the truth of this. I hope you will not think my paradox stupid.

LETTER LXI

October 1812

I AM happy to see, by a letter to my father, that you are arrived safe at Calcutta. I am to give you the news of this place. There is hardly any, but I am glad to avail myself of the slightest excuse for writing to you. My father too, I believe, has anticipated me in all the little articles I was collecting. The only occurrence of *importance* that has since taken place, was our commencement-ball at the club, two nights ago. We had some travellers, which accounts for our mustering rather strong. Miss —, a young lady about twelve, danced a pretty little *pas-seul*, to the tune of Morgiana. A wish was expressed that some gentleman would be gallant enough to dance *it with her!* A blunder of another kind entertained me much, a few days ago, at a sale; the auctioneer proclaiming, with elegant ship-sloperry, the next lot to be—"A poem, as wery much

in wogue called the *Scotch Merryman!*" (Scott's Marmion.)

I am glad to hear of your success at chess. We have a new-comer Mr B***** who we hear is a great player. I shall be afraid to encounter him, for I am so much out of practice that my play must be as Johnson would express it, *really desquamated*. I must try him *coute que coute* like a true knight-errant, in a day or two.

Captain C**** has sent some garden seeds to my father which Mrs W***** sent down for you. As you may know persons about to travel upwards it may save them an unnecessary trip to tell you that the Sooty is impassable for large boats: a pinnace was stopped three days ago. It belonged to Captain and Mrs R. P***** who have been and will be for some time with the S*****. You must recollect her as Miss B*****.

I had a letter two days ago from Mr W*****. He has been extremely ill but is quite recovered again, he speaks of coming down very shortly and staying some days with us which I rejoice at. His mind is made up on going to England by the first fleet having even, I believe, taken his passage. I hope you will have returned before he arrives.

I have only looked into Young's "Night Thoughts" since you returned them. I am really very much obliged to you for complying with my request, in marking with your pencil the passages you liked best

I have begun Mackenzie's "Iceland"—the preliminary dissertation on its history and literature, by Dr Holland, I admired much. The "Travels" I find, as far as I have gone, very entertaining; indeed, any remarks on so singular a country must be interesting, and, as I doubt not, I shall like it to the end. Yet, being in rather a perverse humour, I chose to fancy myself, in reading it, a reviewer, and looked out for spots to exercise hypercriticism on. I send you what occurred in a few pages, dished up à la pocket-book. Ridicule is not exactly the test of truth, and I like this book, but I was imagining to myself, what an old surly twister of meanings could make out of it. The other books I have not read. I hope your supply from England answers your expectations. General M***** was taken very ill three or four days ago, a kind of fit—*mort de chien*—the doctor said, brought on by eating too many radishes. He is quite recovered again.

Since writing the above yesterday, I have had a note from ——— he speaks of a comet being visible between one and two o'clock in the morning. Have you seen it? I sat up this morning to look for it, but the sky was spread over with thin clouds and the moon shone very brightly. Of course, I was unsuccessful. I will try again though ——— may be only *quissing* and, till the moon is older there is not much chance of discovering it. It is in vain you lent him Mr Bonnycastle—he does not tell me a word of its direction in the heavens. I suspect some of the Kishnaghur gentry have seen a *star double*, and took it for a comet.

I hope you are enjoying a great deal of pleasure in Calcutta, but not enough to make you regret returning here—rather selfish. You keep I suppose to your intention of leaving Calcutta at the end of the month and in that case will be here by the 5th or 6th probably the sooner the better for the place is very stupid without Cossimbazar.

I have not heard lately from Rungpore though the T***s must be on their way down. As the Bhagretty will be shut it is very probable that they will not come over here. Of old Camps I have heard nothing but have repeated the invita-

tion, and proposed that, should he not come with Dr T***, he should accompany G. M***** down, who promises to be here in the cold weather. It can hardly, however, be expected that the good old gentleman should undertake so long a trip.

As your time must be fully occupied in Calcutta, never mind replying to this letter, unless, indeed, you have an idle moment—"The leisure hour is all that I can claim." I have apologised so often for badness of writing, that I scarcely need do it again.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR

[During the intermediate period from October 1812 to July 1813, the correspondence ceased, as the parties resided at the same station. And the Editor takes the present opportunity of inserting several letters which have been obligingly communicated to her by a friend who was then in India, and also in correspondence with Mr Addison.]

LETTER LXII.

March 1812.

DEAR R*****

I have this moment received yours of the 5th. I need not say how much I admire the enclosure. You are right in observing that I shall not be at a loss to discover the author—every syllable betrays him—you have no other in Rungpore—nay you have no one in India that writes in the same way I defy him to assume an incognito—*vera mecum patuit dea*—his very step is enough. Pray do make him for me my acknowledgments in your handsomest manner Tell him I am quite

in raptures with his verses—and you will tell him simply the truth. I am not surprised at any thing from M****. but really in any other, such facility, such elegance—(but I might exhaust the whole list of words encomiastic)—would surprise me indeed. But I stand no chance of being surprised—I shall not meet them elsewhere.

But, seriously, R*****, is it not a shame that he who can write in this manner—who could, without flattery, “set all Parnassus in a blaze” if he pleased—should sit down so indolently at “Saftabarry?”* I am quite in a passion with him. Pray do pay him a visit, and steal his box of *Khubun-daree Ragburg* for me. I am not quite cool yet. I received your letter not a quarter of an hour ago, and though I had the verses by heart at the first reading, I did not stop until the twentieth—then dashed off a copy for *notre dame de Cosimbazar*, and would now tell you how very, very much I admire them, but cannot hit on the suitable expressions. However, I leave it to you to make the proper thanks for me.

Pray do not forget particularly Davy’s Locker, the Hog-spear, and the dose of Jalap. These

* Name of Mr M’s residence

are embellishments indeed. I scarcely know myself again so much has M**** improved me by stripping me of my toga. To say the best of me my dress was rather too much of one colour but here I have become as gay and varied as a peacock's tail. I am like Peter's block of wood. The couplet—

“ So one day in a frantic fit, they tell ye,

He drove his hog-spear through his best friend's belly ”

is really inestimable —like Boileau's sonnet— il vaut un long poëme and the elegant close— finis coronat opus. When I read the compliment to myself— gare le fromage —had I had one in my mouth I must have dropped it for à ces mots le corbeau—ne se sent pas de joie. In short it is all and every way excellent

You ask me to send you up any literary novelties I may have. I will make you up a parcel in a few days of whatever I can procure and send it up to you by a cooly by return of whom you may send me whatever you please

The socks for T*** have been long ordered as you know. I will hurry them and report progress when I visit Calcutta. In the meantime remember me to Mr and Mrs T***

How is G M* * * * *?—we hear extremely

ill It was wrong in you not to say any thing about him

I saw Messrs P***** and T***** on the 7th. They stayed a day or two with my father, but by this time they are of course, with you

There has been rain here but I have been particularly unfortunate it has not extended to me All the south of the district has been inundated, and I have not had a single puddle It has been frequently black and cloudy—but all passes over However I must remember what Nizami says,—

“ Though rudest grief or pain assail,
Still hope through dark misfortune's hour
From yon black clouds, that low ring sail,
May fall the lucid, crystal shower ”

I wish it would, for my patience is utterly exhausted By the by, you have never sent me D*****'s verses on Mrs M*****—you must get me a copy Has your uncle yet arrived at Rungpore? Pray, be not so economical of your handwriting—it improves by use, so let me have all the news I am, however, ready to excuse the paucity of this article in your last, in favour of the enclosure—for which let me thank M***** and you again—Yours very sincerely,

G A. ADDISON.

LETTER LXIII

April 1812.

DEAR R*****

I have this day sent you off thirty books of which I enclose a list. Prince de Ligne's are in a style of great liveliness and *naïveté*. I think Campo and yourself will like them—and I am sure M**** will. This is Mrs D****'s, who does not now send any more as I told her I was sending a parcel.

Chamfort and Cazotte are your own. I send some new novels but I cannot recommend as I have not myself read them. The "Contes de Prévost" will amuse you, being principally tales about England—of all that relates to which country the author's consummate ignorance is vastly entertaining. Pray read particularly his account of Savage. Poetry he says was an inspiration he caught in Newgate—that the poem called "The Bastard" was written against him by his

enemies, but that, in spite of all their machinations, he was happily reconciled to his *father* and mother!!

In another place he says, that the Scotch are famous for—"ce que l'on appelle—*blunders*." For Scotch, read *French* Idolatry, by his account, too, very lately prevailed in the savage parts of Ireland. Is it not very strange that the French should be so deplorably ignorant of all that relates to their neighbours?

I never met, by any chance, the English words used by them spelt right. Did you ever? I hope we do not expose ourselves in the same way. You must not show this to Campo*.

I have received from my father the balance of his account with you, and now send you mine completed. The stockings I put down at thirty-five rupees the *corge*, thus being the common price, but forgot to keep a memorandum, the socks I send with the books. The balance, sixty-eight rupees fourteen annas, you must take out in a commission, or let it stand over till next settling.

You will be surprised to hear of our increased

* Abbreviation of the name of an old French gentleman, named Campagnac.

sociability We have just formed a *Chess Club*—fifteen members. Tulloh's house is given to us by the Nawaub. It is to be suitably furnished, and amply provided with chess backgammon &c. boards and a billiard-table—open at all times a general meeting and tiffin weekly for the members and a dinner to the station once a fortnight. Quite, you perceive on the best scale. We have 3000 rupees to lay in stock with and are to subscribe each twenty rupees per month. (Hazard prohibited.)

L** is chosen perpetual manager of stock, and curator of wines—the President to be weekly in rotation. The members are General M***** my father L** I**** D*** F*** A***** M***** Captain W***** Rev Mr C***** Captain C***** C H***** Captain M*****, and myself. The only additional member we expect is now with you Mr S****—and he will be one of the best.

It is called the Chess Club but you will perceive by the list that this will not be the only object.

Many thanks for D****'s effusion. Best compliments to all at Rungpore

LITTLER LXIV

June 1812

DEAR R*****

You say you will send back the last supply of books as quick as possible. I hope this will reach you before you have done it. I must call on you for T*****'s "*reapnorty*" Did J**** P**** lose, or not your "*Novice of St Dominick*?" If you have it, send it in the parcel, for Mrs D*** has not read it. For the same lady I want your French Ana too, and for myself, Ritson's Old Ballads, &c, and any thing else you may deem entertaining.

I shall have a good-sized parcel ready for Campo by the time your man arrives. Your commissions I have already executed! Nay, now, no musty "*credat*,"—positively the stockings, tapes, and reins, are all purchased.

Where are the towels I commissioned you about,

a full Troy's siege ago for Miss R*****? This young lady is constantly writing to me about them and I ought therefore to thank your idleness for the honour of her correspondence. Pray do look back to your memoranda, and send me these towels. As to quantity &c. I have forgotten all about them but you who are so regular must have a slip of paper stating all the needful unless indeed the rats carried it off at the time of the ever memorable rape of the cash book.

Oh, what a glorious subject for a poem! Granger would have given me a motto from his didactic — "The Sugar Cane.

"Now muse, let's sing of rats!"

I might too have borrowed another line from him and in summing up all the disasters mentioned how

"Cockroaches crawl displeasingly abroad.

But alas! what muse ever know any thing of a cash book? Such fiction would be too improbable. My harp Judaick must not be too bold

The S*****s are not yet arrived. When I see them I will ask about "Alphonsine"

You are quite mistaken about our new institution when you speak of contributions. I shall never

make any other than so many rupees per month. It is called a "Chess Club," but this is a misnomer. Some of us play chess, it is true, but I doubt whether a single board is, or is intended to be, procured. The name was chosen as the first that offered, and because chess is much played here just now. It is so far good, as it precludes the idea of gambling. The sole object of the Club is, as far as I know of it, to give a grand dinner and ball twice a month to all the station, and a bachelor's tiffin once a-week. We have taken an "hotel gain" in Berhampore, for which we are to pay 200 rupees per month to General M*****. Accounts to be made up, and expenses shared, every month. Cannot guess what they may prove to be. We have about twenty members of two denominations—permanent and honorary—(more misnomers). The latter pay only a share of the current expenses, which are, I do not yet know what. All confused work, in my opinion. There are no rules that would do your club any good, or I would send them. We have officers enough—president, vice-president, perpetual manager, perpetual acting manager, secretary—the two first in rotation. L** is manager, Captain C***** manages

and Mr C***** is our secretary First great dinner on the 12th. You shall know our expenses &c. as I know them myself. Some proposed that the Club should be called The Union, (*lucus a non lucendo*) because we have had nothing but wrangling yet.

Being bent on brotherly friendship a Freemason Lodge, The Minerva, is to be revived here. Mr C***** master C H***** senior warden—about twenty desirous of being apprenticed. My present opinion is that I will not belong to it First because I dislike unnecessary oaths and secrets and, secondly because I cannot imagine that any good can be done in, that cannot equally be done out of a lodge thirdly because I consider confining brotherly love or charity to any particular order a narrowing principle fourthly because my only motive would be curiosity which ought not to be gratified at the expense of an oath fifthly and most strongly because if I ever married, I should not like to have a secret from my wife sixthly—but I could string twenty more—suffice these. Tell me what you think on the subject—will you ever be one of the brotherhood?

I have taken a sheet of such bad paper that I

am out of all patience with it, and will therefore conclude Remember me to all friends

P S —You have a French Bible—look me out, and copy *literatim* for me the following verses—John, ii 4, 1 Kings, xvii 6, Judges, xv 4, Luke, xxiii 32

I do not expect a good season All my lands are sown, and the plants thriving, but they were sown so late, that I expect the inundation to sweep away the plant before it is half-ripe This is very bad How are you in this way?

LETTER LXV

June 1812.

DEAR R*****

The books cloths &c., all arrived safely I have sent you by the return coaches thirty four volumes, which I hope will prove agreeable to my good friend Campo Mrs D*** and myself have exactly divided this packet—seventeen are hers—as many mine The Unknown, in Mr Lathom's best style—you know what that is. The Woman of Colour is in spite of the title of the better order of novels. The Son of the Storm," read and judge—the title and author's name frightened me from doing so Ralph Roybridge you will find extremely amusing—I like it much "Charles et Mario I am not sure whether I like or not—there are some pretty sentiments in it but the hero is most unamably suspicious, and the heroine most *milk-and-waterly* tame Yet do not trust to

my judgment, for the Edinburgh Reviewers have honoured this work with an approving critique almost as long as the book itself

Your reins tapes, and stockings accompanied the books They are the best of the kind I could get The *short* (i e I presume what we call *half*-) stockings for C M***** shall be procured, and sent by the next opportunity.

I am very glad to hear of Manning's safety S**** told me that you had begun to be alarmed on his account Now, recollect, in performing your promise of giving me an account of his travels, that I expect something not very concise—and that I shall hear of difficulties or excuses with much impatience

I am very sorry to hear of M*****'s illness Pray write me whether he is quite well again or not

Our Club gave a dinner and ball on the 12th We sat down about sixty—every thing in the best style, and went off in the best manner Still, I do not like it It will be much too expensive, and is not the right kind of *Club* You shall know more when we are called on for our shot

D*** received your note about the boat, and

has written to B*** about it. Of course you will hear further from him. I know of no place near the head of the Jellinghy where a parcel could be dropped. A parcel might be left with B*** at Puthabarry and he would forward it to me—I know no other way

Thanks for the French texts. Send down all the books you mention—this is a style of reading I like. I have much on witches myself and could cast a figure on occasion. If Scott's work be among them I shall be glad to read it, from D Israel's warm eulogium. *A propos* of old books, did you ever read Howell's Letters?—vastly entertaining. I can send them to you. I have lately been reading a most entertaining work—much talked of but not often met—Brown on Vulgar Errors. Did you ever see it? It is an admirable and close chain of reasoning, and is almost as rich in book-learning as even Burton himself. Ask M**** whether he ever read it if not (though most probably he has) it would be a rich treat to him. Some of the errors he argues against are vastly amusing. Thus he proves most satisfactorily, that it is a calumny to averre that Jewes stinke. Read the account in the paper of the magnanimous

Joe's ball at *Kuttuk* We, who have so often hung delighted on his silver tones, can well conceive "the grand, harmonious, and impressive effect," when he sung "that beautiful anthem with so much pathos" How delightedly must Mrs S*** have read this account! By the way, is not Mr R, who sang "Donald M'Donald," your brother?—and is not all this excellent quiz a wicked trick of his?

I shall be gläd to receive your catalogue Calcapore and Cossimbazar I have nearly exhausted, and I have no other libraries at my command Pray give me a little news of Rungpore, for I always like to hear of it What are the *Uslees* all about—and what kind of people are your last importations? When does your uncle, or does he at all, propose returning to Calcutta?—and will he not come this way? My acquaintance with him was, you know, of the slightest kind—but I hope to renew and increase it

Our indigo season here promises variously—in some places better, others worse. Mine depends entirely on the river I have a great deal of plant thriving well, but which was, through want of rain, sown so late, that an *early* rise of the river will drown a great proportion before it be ripe

If the trouble of copying out were not so great I would send you some of my late effusions. Of course I continue to 'scribble scribble' on all kinds of subjects. My pen is afflicted with St Vitus's disease and will not be quiet—I can't help it. You shall have sundry lucubrations in the next letter. Pray do you continue as inexorable as ever?—no muse yet softened your hard heart? Come R***** you must in fairness send me something!

Remember me to all friends. ♡

LETTER LXVI

June 1812

DEAR R*****,

I have been expecting for some days to hear from you. It is a considerable time since I wrote, and I looked for an account from you of our poor friend's last moments. Dear M*****! we shall not easily supply his loss. I need not tell you how very, very grieved I was to hear of his death. All who knew him must have been so, and I really loved him. He was one of the best-informed and pleasantest men I ever knew. The stroke was sudden,—we must *hope* not too much so. Do tel

municated it first to me In her and S**** too he had two sincere mourners.

Since I heard this melancholy news I have been thinking of nothing else. To a man of M****'s classical attainments a Latin Epitaph is positively due. I hope your uncle or some other friend equal to it, will pay this tribute to his memory yet besides your uncle I do not know any one who is likely to do it. Even he may not choose—though I trust his inclination will need no pressing If pressing will serve you must not spare it. I am perfectly aware that for the chastity and terseness of expression required in monumental inscriptions a thorough knowledge of the language must be possessed and consequently fully know how incompetent I am to attempt such a task. Yet, poor as it is mine will be more respectful than none—and trust my example will urge on your uncle to do it In love for his late friend, he ought to take him out of my murdering hands. I send you, accordingly an attempt at an epitaph I composed this morning The grave-stone is not the place to tell an untruth on and I could not, therefore dwell on what I should have most liked to do—religion Ho had I hope more than he expressed—(I think he had)

but still, I fear, less than we could have wished. I hope you will say you agree with me, and I should be delighted could you add, you have reason to do so

Dr Johnson recommends that every epitaph should inculcate some moral. I knew not what other to draw from poor M****'s life—than the expression of regret that such talents and abilities should have proved barren. The four verses subjoined contain no great stretch of thought, but I aimed at simplicity in them, and if you approve of the turn of sentiment, I shall say—"omne tulit punctum."

As I have written all this out here, (and, indeed, had it been in Moorshedabad it would have been the same,) with no one to look it over and critically examine it, I am, of course, in great apprehensions lest I have committed many solecisms in grammar and prosody. I should not like to be detected in false concords or quantities. You will, therefore, very greatly oblige me by first showing it to your uncle alone, and ask him to have the kindness to take for me the critic's office, and guard me against being laughed at. Pray look through it very closely, and should either he or yourself detect

errors you will, of course, make the necessary corrections. My hand is so out of practice in Latin, that I expect you will find several. Particularly I am by no means sure of my tenses when I get into the subjunctive mood. For *fuerint* and *reliquerit* I think the following authority will bear me out— Hoc solum iniquum quod quum tam multa *fecerit* laudabilia, *vetuerit* se laudari. Here the same tenses are used, and I think the cases are very similar. Of the rest I am more afraid. Cum talis *fuerit* margarita nunquam *exuerit* —perhaps it ought to be margaritam nunquam *exuisse*. Pray get this rigorously judged and the better adopted. I inclined myself to *exuisse* but I recollected a speech of somebody s— cum talis sis, utinam noster *esses* —and proceeded on analogy. Te nostrum *esse* would certainly be less elegant in the latter place, but I am not sure but the infinitive mood would be best for the former. Are the tenses too I have used, the right ones even if the mood be proper? Got this too well enquired into. I should be cruelly annoyed to be found afterwards guilty of blunders, and now throw these into your hands to be pruned and trimmed as you please.

In the verses get your uncle to look sharp after the false quantities, they are most material points (I am giving him much trouble, but you must take that on your shoulders—I will repay you whenever you please) I conclude that I may Latinize almost how I please, a proper name—Marsus, Marsis, or Marses—all fair I have chosen the latter because I like its euphony best, and to save myself from a false quantity I cannot bring in the name so well in any other part, and were I to use the vocative of either of the two first—Mārsē or Mārsī—my verse would be incorrect, but Mārsēs saves me from this, and is, I think, equally well Latin for the name On this point I hope you will not differ from me, as my lines depend on it.

John and Herod, when taken up by the Greeks and Latins, become Johannes and Herodes I do not know the Hebrew of Manasses, but I suspect the “cs” to be Greek In the same way, King Khosro of the Persians becomes, when naturalized at Rome, “Chosroes,” Gunga flumen, Ganges, &c &c. Pray, press this point for me I hope I am right I have nothing more to observe—yes—one word on “umbra” In the dictionaries you will find that this means “spirits” when in the plural

number and this sense is affixed in the ' Gradus only to umbra. But Virgil is lord paramount when authority is the question—and he says—

"Infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusæ."

I have looked again at the Gradus and find I might have spared this quotation—there is a little note which escaped me

I have nothing more to say on this. Remember that I transmit it to you in confidence. Show it only to your uncle. If he will write one himself I shall be rejoiced or if Manning would do it when he returns or in short, any one else, say nothing of my attempt. But if no one will and you think mine can be made any thing of let me know. At least I have satisfied myself in showing my good will.

A translation accompanies—not that you, but that my *Latin* may need it. Pray do not be dilatory—as you are, in general, too much so—in answering this. Use your own discretion for me altogether and if you think good, if any thing appear wrong in it do not show it to any one. I have said, amici posuerunt—but I know nothing of your intentions on this subject. Pray write me fully about them.

What becomes of poor M****'s books, &c.? If they are to be sold, I should like to get his "Hortus Malabaricus" What others has he? Should any manuscripts or other papers appear, I know, if possible, you will let me see them

LETTER LXVII

July 1812.

DEAR R*****

At last I have a letter from you. You have behaved sadly ill. I wrote, in the beginning of last month, a letter which you have not even yet replied to and again towards the end of it one to which I *begged* a speedy answer and you took three weeks to it. This was very annoying for several reasons. Among others, I wanted to send the four Latin lines to the *Mirror* but wished to wait for any criticisms that might be given in your quarter. I waited till I was tired out, and then sent them off. You will have seen them in the last paper. An acknowledgment, simply of half a dozen lines would not have cost you much trouble. But enough only pray do not be so slow another time for *expecting* is the most vexatious of all things and you gave me rather too abundant a dose of it.

I am sorry your uncle would not undertake the critic's office D****, you rightly conclude, I do not much care about; he has, I believe, knowledge enough of words, but is, I suspect, rather deficient in the taste required for combining them. I wish you would steal an opinion from Manning.—by the account you gave me of him, I should value it much, whether favourable or otherwise Is Mr F***** a good scholar? I do not ask the question as relatively to the present matter, but generally;—what kind of members of society do you find him and Mr P*****? You never let me know any thing of the *domesticity* of Rungpore

I have had only one opportunity of submitting my attempt to a critical revision Our pastor, the Rev Mr C*****, a very good scholar, undertook this very good-naturedly, and, after critical examination he said—pronounced it without fault, which, of course, not a little pleased me At his suggestion, I altered “corde” into “mente” He considered the latter part as a more poetical word,—I, of course, adopted what he opined best There is not a great deal of difference, one is, he says, a little more poetically authorized, but he allowed the other to compensate this by being a shade more affection-

ate It was an *utrum horum major accipe* ' and I therefore took his.

I am flattered by your approbation much but I wish you could have picked me up a few criticisms. The words on which I expressed a doubt, I am now satisfied about indeed, I would not have adopted the ones I have had I not had a preference for them. But I gave you my authorities that you might have submitted them to any critic who would have gone over it for me and who seeing what had induced my choice of any particular word might then have weighed well whether I was satisfactorily or not borne out by them. I had myself a strong doubt on one point but have since searched well and am pretty well satisfied. But I shall still be very glad if you could get any faults detected and corrected.

In going over M****'s papers, pray do not destroy any thing (His accounts, pecuniary of course, I have nothing to say to)—but of the scraps of all kinds—calculations, chemical botanical poetical &c., remains, do not throw any away. Whatever you may deem worthy of the fire or nonsensical, throw into a package for me. Of course I only wish for what would otherwise be destroyed. Of

the poetry you find, do not copy alone what you may think worth sending, but copy *all*; for I have a great wish to have any thing of his, good or bad. If you find this, as is probable, too troublesome a task, make up a packet of the originals, which lend me for a short time,—I will copy what I like, and return them all faithfully. I wish you may find a memorandum about Lord Valentia

Your account of his illness I am very much obliged to you for—the circumstances are very affecting. The memorandum addressed to you is of a strange wildness, but is like him. This, and the other parts of your letter, made me quite melancholy. Poor M****!—but this subject is a painful one, and I will drop it

P S — Indigo promises indifferently. Farm-working began on the 8th. Where are Manning's Travels? Write me a long letter, or woe be to you! “If thou dost not thou are lorn,” &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

September 1812.

MY DEAR R*****,

I have yours of the 26th. Immediately on receipt of it I sent to Bogwangolah and the Ghats here, to enquire for a boat the men have just returned. At Bogwangolah there are none of any description here there are only two one fourteen oared budgerow which is putting in repair but will not be ready for a considerable time the other of sixteen oars, a good budgerow The manjee will I doubt not, go for eight rupees per oar per month though at present he asks nine. Should this please you, you must not make any delay in taking it or it may be hired by some one else

On receipt of your letter before last, I immediately sent off two parcels of books for you to Putkabarry but wished to hear of the arrival of

your people from Rungpore before I wrote to you. This I did not do until the 21st last. In the mean time I had been having a very indifferent indigo season, and a smart touch of illness, both which made me very averse to writing; since then, I have been so busy here, and am so much so at present, that, as there was nothing particularly urgent, I delayed, from day to day, to write. We must not debit and credit, but overlook little fits of negligence,—“*hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim*”

My indigo season will leave me a loser, on balance, of four or five thousand rupees, I expect. B***** clears himself, I suspect. P*****'s not more. H***** talks largely—but you know the proverb. R***** has done excellently. B***** being my neighbour, suffers, I believe, in the same proportion as myself.

I am engaged just now, very hard, in trying to obtain the appointment of deputy-superintendent of embankments here, as R***** is going home. It is four hundred rupees per month—a very handsome sum. I have an opponent in the elder De l'E****, in whose favour all the P***** interest, of course,

is Messrs L***** and C***** write to my father that it will rest on the recommendation of the Pool Committee of this station, in which case I am secure, having obtained four out of six votes in it. You know Mr P***** and may therefore suppose that I am not too sanguine but still I hope to be able to *counter manœuvre*. This will I trust, be deemed sufficient apology for silence. By the way recrimination is bad—you have not answered my last letter of 20th July Pray sit down and do so. That is a bad trick of yours—you write letters, but not answers. Now I never sit down to write without your letters before me and reply to each part. But never mind I grant you are a very good correspondent.

The books all came safely and I am much obliged to you for them. As to *keeping* them I shall wish to keep many if you intend to part with any Pray do oblige me in this case by making for me a list with prices I want several, but would not, on any account take them if it is not quite your wish to dispose of them. I am sorry very sorry *quant à moi* that you intend to leave this part of the world but *quant à vous* con

gratulate you. All this matter we must discuss when we meet, which, I hope, will be soon. Pray, give me the refusal of the books you part with.

I have been so engaged that I have as yet read only one, "The Swift Messenger," an entertaining little work. What of M****'s papers? You have not answered me there, nor do you tell me whether you ever got a *critique* for me from Manning—his travels, too, in Bootan. Oh, R*****, R*****, you are as idle as I am! The "Ode on Badger" I cannot afford, in fact, my rhyming energies are from want of practice, quite dull and blunted.

Our Club *s'en va* tolerably. Billiards have kept it alive—and indeed it was rather the *fashion* lately—*entire nous*, I am *afraid* it will *live*; but it adds little to the gaiety of the station, and is somewhat too expensive. I have dined at it *once* since its institution.

There is nothing but *battling* going forward—the appeal court among themselves, and with the judge. Society suffers from it, as several houses have no intercommunication, but, still, the *pleasantest* part is in peace, and I therefore care not

Poor Miss B***** is not at all better, and there are no hopes of her recovery. Will your uncle and

Mrs T*** come down this way! I hope so—in this case, as the D***s will be in Calcutta I trust they will favour my father with their company. Of course he will immediately write. Pray press them for us to this. Would it be actually impossible to persuade Campo to come down for a couple or three months? He might undertake the voyage without much inconvenience—could stay with us or the S****s, as he liked best till the D***s returned and might then pay his much-wished visit to Cosambazar. I talked of this with Mrs D*** this morning—she wishes it very much. Pray ask our good friend Campo whether it is quite impossible to exert his energies in this case—he must recollect how many he will oblige. Give him my remembrances and tell him I hope this very much. A**** sends his compliments and wants from you a supply of turnip-seed, and Bootan walnuts when they arrive. B***** intends to sell his indigo factories if he can, this season. B*** at Putlabarry will have an excellent season. Remember me to all friends and believe me to be though sometimes idle always yours &c

LETTER LXIX

September 1812

DEAR R*****,

I will not apologise for having delayed to reply, as the essential part has not been omitted, and I have been very much engaged running about, &c

The budgerow, of which I formerly wrote to you, was engaged before your answer respecting it arrived, and there was some difficulty in getting another One, however, of fourteen oars left this, with the proper directions to proceed up the Tees-tah, as near to Booribarree as possible, on the 23d A Chuprassy went with it, to make it make as much expedition as it can, but you are yourself the best judge of when it will be in your neighbourhood The price is the customary one here—eight rupees per month, per oar I have given an advance of a hundred rupees Contrive, if possible, to bring

down our good friend Campo G M***** talks of being here in the cold weather consequently he might easily return with him

I am sorry to give you a bad account of the Pool-Bundy Major P***** having arrived is ordered to come up with all expedition to relieve Mr R**** and Lord Minto has declared it to be his intention to make a saving for the Company by doing away the deputyship altogether Of course my expectations are destroyed! This is a most severe disappointment to me I had sanguinely hoped to obtain the appointment and, indeed must have done it, but for this *cutting* arrangement It would have been every way the best thing I could have had being with my father—in the society I like best—with duties I think I could have performed satisfactorily and with a salary equal to the extent of my wishes. But all this you can conceive—the disappointment I feel heavily

I am nevertheless, determined not to continue in my indigo concern. I have now attempted this for four years, and am worse than when I began by four or five thousand rupees. Should I ever be involved to even double this amount, I should consider myself ruined for life—interest would

accumulate—I should exist in unhappiness—and, perhaps, never be able to clear myself

I have a great dread of being in debt, and know I should be miserable were I ever in it I am determined, then, not to continue in a business which, to my cost, I have found so uncertain. My present accounts I can easily settle, but I fear much to risk in it further. I have, therefore, two or three days ago, with my father's advice, sold my share to B****. He gives me twenty thousand rupees for it, which is the price settled by D*** and myself But this is doleful writing,—when I see you, I can talk all these matters over.

Your commissions are in hand, and will be ready by the time you arrive here The elephant, &c, species of chessmen, are, however, not procurable without a special order, and the making them never takes less than five or six months What are your wishes? Of the other kind I will answer that you shall be satisfied. I have brought them to great perfection, and have exerted my energies of taste in inventing some new *numoonus* The silk handkerchiefs can be procured in half an hour, it will therefore be better that your uncle take his choice of the patterns here, when he favours us

with his company Pray remember me to him
and Mrs T*** The solitaire-board, and button-
shall be ready

For the list of books, I thank you My father
will be obliged to you for the accompanying listful,
—that is of course, if you wish to part with them
Exclusive of these, I will thank you for those
marked in the smaller list you can bring them
with you P***** whom you know is here—my
father's assistant.

LETTER LXX

June 1813

MY DEAR R*****,

I have now given you six months to look about you By this time I hope you are comfortably seated in some snug little domain in the north of Ireland, with every thing around you in accustomed neatness, and, though not quite married, (for such speed becomes only our hemisphere,) yet with all your erratic particles magnetised by some little blue-eyed cynosure You have a heart, I know, too generous to think such a state as single blessedness possible And now you have all the requisite preparatives, delay as little as you can to turn them to the best advantage But I will not give you any more of these sage musty reflections, enough, that I wish you all your wishes—you will frame them best yourself

I have not written to you before, though I have

been fifty times tempted to do so but correspondence at such distance is better preserved by regularity than frequency the latter is generally very great at first, but soon wears out into its opposite whilst punctuality preserves itself Twice a-year will be sufficient if constant. Recollect, my dear R***** you promised not to fail me in writing thus often nor knowing your good habits of regularity do I think you will. With me is the more probable fear—mine I know is rather the spirit of speed, but with you I hope to evince that I have also some bottom, and you may rely on having from me six monthly accounts of what our friends here are about, and all that I think may interest you respecting your old place of abode &c I shall not fear to be too minute for judging by myself I know how pleasing is this kind of intelligence Well does our friend Osman say—(but I forget myself—not our friend you sceptic) sweet is the tale of times of old the relating of some little otherwise insignificant event, is frequently like a chord struck in music simple in itself but which sometimes thrills us from the associations it awakens.

I received your letter from the ship though of

course, I had not time to send you an answer. Your plan of the table was a very ingenious device of indirectly letting me know that you had the honour of being seated next to the young lady—but I am not afraid for you. Your Emerald Isle recollections, as they have protected you here, so they have still guarded you in your passage against Gallic charms, even though they had your Captain's example in their support. My good friend Mr W***** was, perhaps, in more danger from them.

You surprised me in that letter, by saying you had not heard from me. I assure you, on the very day you left Calcutta, I went to Palmer's house, and procured their letter to Paxton & Co, of which I spoke to you, that, enclosed in a farewell to yourself, I sent off without delay by the dák, and you ought to have received it on the day you wrote to me. I hope you afterwards did. I wish I had kept the G. P. O. receipt, but I cannot think any accident happened to the letter.

Pray, let me have a long account of your visit to my dear mother and sisters. I am sure you performed your promise of going to see them as soon after your arrival as you could. You must not

fear being too circumstantial, for I am naturally anxious to hear as much as possible of persons I love so dearly. On my account at first, but afterwards, I am confident, on your own they must have given you a warm welcome. My mother I can conceive had a thousand questions to ask you—but you were a good friend, R***** and did not grudge talking a little about me. This too was but fair for I never omit dwelling on you when I fall in with a mutual acquaintance. And how were you pleased with my sisters? I shall not forgive my little Colette and Carry” (though little they now are not,) if they did not make themselves very agreeable to you, and were not very particular in their enquiries after me. Of course you raised my fraternal dignity by representing to them, as I desired that I was a grave prudent staid kind of young man—somewhat, it is true methodistical but never as they may wickedly imagine in love with princesses.

By this time I trust you have seen Louisa too. I am sure you must have liked her for she must be very much altered if you do not find her very, handsome very sensible and very excellently tempered. Pray do tell me all the hows and

abouts,—when you went to see my mother, where
&c &c &c

You could not but have had a pleasant voyage home, with such a captain, and such fellow-passengers W***** you must have liked greatly, he is the companion of all hours, the *taza bu taza*, *nou-bu-nou* His flow of spirits constant, stores of entertainment not easily exhausted, and manners so gentlemanly and polished—but not the cold marble polish of mere world—amber were a better simile, whose polish gives out both warmth and fragrance. You would admire his nice tact and happiness of expression. In short, if I can at all judge of you by myself—and our tastes pretty well agreed here—you must have liked him very much

I stayed in Calcutta about a fortnight after you left it, and in that period paid a visit to the Lord, who was very gracious to me, and recommended me to turn my views towards Java He had nothing, he said, in his own gift which might do for me, but would speak in my favour to General Maitland when he should come out And after many more such homed words to “lap me in Elysium” quite, he requested of R***, who accompanied me, to be favoured with a copy of a work he

understood I had written—the *Moffusil Magazine*!! Here were honours!! But I suspect these will prove the utmost extent I have not much confidence in obtaining any favour from him

* * * * *

As, however I am determined never to engage again in indigo I must not remain here idle but small as the prospect of success may be must try Lord Minto once again. I intend going down in a week or two to Calcutta, and, consulting with my friends there either boldly ask his Lordship for some vacant appointment here in the *Pool-Bundy* or any other way or as it is now certain that General Maitland is not coming ask him, as he first spoke of Java to me to give me letters of recommendation to whom else is, or is to be the governor there and with these and such others as I can obtain I will like a knight-errant, sally forth to seek my fortune *nil desperandum*. Who knows but I may yet, like Sancho Panza get some lordship of an island given to me? But I must confess I agree in this with that illustrious squire of squires I should prefer being made a duke or bishop or any thing of that kind so it be on the continent or mainland—I would rather stay here *sed qua fata trahunt*

etrahuntque sequamur. My motto shall be—
Aufer or prospici.

G***** M***** is at present down here. He has come to meet his brother P***** and his wife. The two latter are returned from the Cape and Isle of France, quite recovered. He is appointed assistant-judge at Purneah. The lady seems to be good-humoured, and certainly sings very well, but I have seen too little of her to judge whether all your Rungpore eulogiums are just,—she has a fine fat little girl. G. is as great a politician as ever. I have about a weekly essay from him on Russia or Spain.

By the way, (but that is *entre nous*,) my friends here have been wanting me, too, to try my hand at a weekly essay. B***** intends going home next cold weather, and D***, General P*****, and M***** paid me the compliment of thinking of me as his successor. They proposed that I should buy the editorship, and would even, if necessary, have assisted me in raising the means. But I know myself better. Even had I—as I have not—the requisite ability, the concern is too hazardous to engage in. Nothing is more precarious than a speculation of this kind. Fashion or accident alone

raises or depresses the sale and, indeed it is not so much its number of subscribers as of advertisements that makes a paper lucrative. Now the

Mirror you know though it has the greatest number of the former has the fewest of the latter whilst at the same time, the price of the share is of course proportioned to its present high reputation which, whoever may be the future editor will probably sink as the retirement of B**** who is so great a favourite and of several other proprietors, will be a matter of notoriety In short, my reasons were sufficiently satisfactory to convince them that it would not do

Dr W***** of the Mint, a very clever young man, and M. L**** are reported to have been in treaty for it, though that negotiation is, I know now over

I hear from Campagnac constantly and take care to send him parcels of books regularly He was much afraid that your going away would have broken his literary intercourse with us, but M***** undertook to be the agent on the Rung pore side Old Campo talks of paying us a visit at the end of the rains. He wishes I believe to go to Chandernagore to take his daughter out of the

hands of those Philistines, as he deems them, the missionaries. They have lately made him wax wroth most exceedingly by christening his daughter "Anne" instead of "Anna'!" He says this is the very quintessence of Puritanism And, in fear of her morals being starched into ruin, is going to take her home with him.

Indigo, as usual, promises variously in the different districts

Pray, remember me kindly to your uncle and aunt. Of Mrs D*** and our friends here, you have heard lately, for I gave your address to Mrs D*** about a fortnight ago that she might write to Mrs T***, The only additional piece of news for your aunt may be, that her little dog Duchess is quite well. Mr J*****, to whom she gave it, is here, stationed with the 14th regiment at Berham-pore

I hear now and then from the S***'s They are well, but do not go on very smoothly in Cuttack

* * * * *

Talking of disputes, your strong Doctor Goliath had a quarrel lately with E***, about wax He issued some high and mighty orders on the subject to the Zameendars, and, being at a loss for a seal,

ordered to be inserted on it in Persian characters

George Padshah *****! Of course the judge soon made him withdraw his Perwannahs I know no other news.

My father is quite well, and begs to be kindly remembered.

You gave me an unfinished piece of poor M***** that beginning Ah paper! You copied down to meet them not in rage. Copy the conclusion for me at your leisure I have sat down to write to you unfortunately in a hurried morning—a dozen times interrupted with visitors and I must conclude though I have still much to say Remember me always my dear R***** for though you may form a thousand friendships where you are you will never find one more sincere than yours affectionately

G A ADDISON

NOTE BY THE EDITOR

In consequence of the entire failure of his indigo prospects, and, indeed, from the young man's utter distaste for that pursuit, his friends were desirous that he should seek employment in some more congenial occupation, and he proceeded to Calcutta, in the hope that the influence of his father and friends might procure him some appointment more suited to his habits of mind

The gentlemen at the Presidency to whom he had letters of introduction, were interested by his general intelligence and unassuming manners, and, in a little time, some influential persons made arrangements for his proceeding to Java, where Mr (since Sir Stamford) Raffles was governor, in the hope that he might have an opportunity of usefully employing young Addison's abilities in some department under himself

The further letters now given, show the result

LETTER LXXI

Calcuttore, July 1813

MY DEAR MRS —,

Many thanks for your kind note. I have certainly so far succeeded in the purposes for which I went to Calcutta, as to obtain the promise of many

letters and heard much encouraging intelligence of Java. But rather the necessity of doing something than the hope of doing well, will carry me there. To myself my prospects seem very little favourable I look forward with very weak expectations but the experiment must be made. Not the least gloomy part of the foreground is the quitting the neighbourhood of Coosimbazar

Fortune *ought* to give me a few smiles, for it will have cost me much to seek them. But, smile as she will she cannot give me an equivalent for the many many pleasant hours I might otherwise have passed in your company. Those I have already done will always be bright azure spots to look back upon, however cloudy may be my future days. The remembrance of them will long long be cherished—as long—but it is useless to speak of the regret I shall feel in leaving a society which has afforded me such pleasure—of one so uniformly kind.—You I hope do me justice in believing that my sorrow will be very very sincere

I am sorry I have no news for D***—not a single article but what he has heard. I heard nothing of Mr McKenzie's appointment and cannot believe it

I arrived late last night

Excuse haste, as the paper goes off to-night I am rejoiced to hear that D***'s prospects at Putkabarry continue so good.

LETTER LXXII

Calcutta, September 1812.

I ought earlier to have replied to your letter but I wished first to be able to speak positively of what is settled about my passage.

I pushed on to Calcutta with all the speed I possibly could, and succeeded in arriving early on Tuesday morning. I went instantly to Mr M***** but was very greatly disappointed at finding that — had as he originally intended, set off on Monday. I hope your letter to him met with some delay or I think, he would have given me a few hours. Pray say how sorry I was to have missed seeing him once again before my departure for Java.

I found the Frederick so extremely small and uncomfortable a ship that I readily attended to the advice of all here to go rather in the Claudine. My passage in the latter is now taken. It will

leave Calcutta between the 15th and 20th. There will not be much difference, if any, in our arrival at Batavia. We are to stop at Bencoolen for a week but this is very little out of the way. About the end of October I hope our voyage will be over.

Many thanks for the letter to Major G****. If I see him you may depend on having a full account—how he looks, and all about him.

Of ———, too, I will learn all I can, and hope very much to be able to write such an account as will please his excellent father. But you shall have it *faithfully*; and good and bad must both be expected. Poor ——— will hardly allow the first to be unalloyed!

The account of your small party I read with many a longing wish to have been at it. How very long may it be before I again meet with such a pleasure! and in the interval what can I find at all equal? But I must not now look backward—I will think only, forwards, of my return, and of seeing pleasant Cossimbazar again, with additional delight from having been so long away. In two or three years it is *possible* that this may happen—and certainly it shall not be my fault if it does not.

I am not afraid that the climate will prove hurt-

ful to me. This country is in a certain measure a preparation for it and I have been so well here that I hope equally to weather the exhalations from Batavia canals and marshes nor does it follow that I shall be settled at the capital, and almost every where else in the island is quite healthy

A thousand thanks for all you say—I cannot acknowledge them as I ought But I will never forget them, or indeed any part of your long series of kindnesses.

* * * * *

I have dined several times at Sir G***** N***** a. He has been extremely kind and polite to me Lady N***** has already written to Mrs N***** for me and also gives me letters to take Lord Minto I do not yet know whether Mr R*** has received or not, as I have not seen him since Sunday There was on Monday a levee at the Government House when probably Mr R*** spoke General P***** I see very often. He is quite well but does not talk of returning and will most probably stay till Lord Moura arrives The symptoms of his lordship's speedy departure from England are fast accumulating Several of his

suite are at Madras, and two riding-horses and a Newfoundland dog are here

The only other arrival of *consequence*, as you will have seen, is that of Mr ———. *He* found it impossible for a gentleman to live on £1500 a-year, and some, too, say, he objected to the company in England—it was too low for him!

The C*****'s are to leave this between the 12th and 15th. You will, I think, like them, they are an extremely agreeable family. Mrs C***** very pleasant and clever, and Miss C***** of excellent disposition and manners. She has been brought up entirely by her mother, and, I think, admirably. Papa spoils E. a little, but she is a very quick, lively, good-natured girl. I find my stay here with them very pleasant, and am sorry they will set off before me. Reading, music, puzzles, &c, are equally liked here; and often, when poring over an anagram, my thoughts fly to Cossimbazar. But I must not speak of it, for it is vain to regret what cannot be remedied.

P S —As I have spoken of puzzles, I pin one to this. Are you sufficiently a housewife to pass so many threads through the eye of a needle?

LETTER LXXIII.

Calcutta, September 1812.

I HAD intended to have had the pleasure of writing to you yesterday but intentions are of little avail in Calcutta one is so interrupted that the day is off before a letter is begun. I certainly do not mean to keep an account-current—to write only in answer—though Calcutta has made me appear to do so I have too much pleasure in it not to avail myself of the permission you give me of writing to you as often as I can. You have so many correspondents and so many mornings broken in upon that it would be unreasonable indeed to expect a very large portion of your time—but you must make me a present of as many leisure moments as you can spare. Numerous as your correspondents are there is not one of them to whom that present will be more acceptable

Your account of the Moorshedabad parties has

amused me much Pray, in your future letters, do not be sparing of this kind of detail—for every thing there must ever be interesting to me. As you observe, Mrs —— will certainly be jealous of ——'s powers of persuasion—nay, in making Mr —— so far unbend as to lead down a dance, may challenge merit with Orpheus himself, when he amused himself with making the stubborn oak. &c., supple their joints to double jig time—the miracle is scarcely less

I am glad you are so pleased with Mr *****. His English dignity revolting at the idea of running by a lady's palanquin is vastly amusing, and quite a trait of character But, I hope, in a short time he will become a convert to our Indian ways, and not only trot with the briskest alacrity through the mud to have the pleasure of being a lady's beau, but even envy the bearers the felicity—which they, simpletons, seem so little to enjoy—of being allowed to support their fair corporeal machines! He has a great deal to learn in this land of chivalry

I am not surprised that the Nawaub's party afforded you so little entertainment Such a crowd, heat, and stupid etiquette must have been disagreeable in the extreme. How poor General

M***** could so far conquer his feelings as to support this good humouredly—and be polite moreover—was indeed surprising Poor Mrs J*****! she must have had the design of breaking a few Begums hearts. I hope Miss R**** contrived not to laugh too much at her splendid appearance. What a pity she is not now here!—the presents received by government from the several kings, rajahs, and nawabs are to be sold in a few days, and there is gold and silver enough there to make her as fine as King Solomon, or the grand camel at Mecca.

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I had written thus far yesterday morning when, to prove the truth of the beginning of my letter I was called out to pay a visit—kept to tiffin—engaged at chess—and then with Mr Chunnery & beautiful pictures till the post was off.

I am very sorry I shall not be able to see again my good friend, old Campo. Pray remember me very kindly to him should you do so but even this is doubtful for if he has as I conclude he will come down by water I do not perceive in what manner he can take Moorsheadabad in the route. It is more probable that he will call on you on his return and

go up from Cossimbazar by easy land stages, Baulah, Nattore, and Silberris

I feel grateful for all you say

I thank you for allowing me to prose in my usual way about what I read, &c The writing such letters, and the hope of receiving yours, will disarm Java of any disagreeables it may possess I expect to leave Calcutta about the 25th I know nothing about my fellow-passengers, save that the captain takes a wife and sister with him.

I hope Dr Robertson may be down in time to go also in the Claudine, it would be extremely pleasant to have him as a companion in the voyage, and I shall do my utmost to try and persuade him to it, he is so good, agreeable, gentlemanly a man

We take twelve horses and two *jack*-asses with us, the latter, it is said, for *milk*! I saw Mr Edmonstone the day before yesterday he was extremely kind, and offered me letters to Mr Raffles and Mr Hope, which, of course, I said I should be greatly obliged to him for, and it is but just I should thank you too, for it is *you* that have given them These letters may probably do me much service, for Mr E is, I believe, very intimate with Mr Raffles I had called at the house several times

before but had not been fortunate enough to find them at home

This morning I breakfasted at the Government House with T***** His lordship was very civil and promised to send me his letter in good time. Nothing is talked of but Lord Moura I hope his lordship may be detained a little however at Madras and elsewhere for it is said, that having so many gentlemen to dispose of fifty at least must be sent to seek their fortunes to the eastward, and I wish to anticipate them.

Three or four of his aides-de-camp are here ——— Nothing can be more splendid than their dresses. The other poor *moosahibs* are quite eclipsed—gold lace ostrich feathers, and mustaches in profusion.

There is an ——— too here whose imagination has been sufficiently heated with the tales of Indian wealth as to have made him give up between two and three thousand pounds per annum in England, to come out under Lord Moura's auspices

The story I told my father about the Austrians wants it seems, confirmation I gave it, however as I received it These ships add nothing to what is known about the arrangements for Java &c

every thing is in a state of profound ignorance. to be enlightened, perhaps, by Lord Mona's arrival His powers as governor-general, commence on his landing at Madras

Calcutta is so idle a place, that of course reading is almost out of the question, but I have seen the outside of a new poem, "Rokeby." in the shops It appears to be not very long; price only *forty-two rupees*!! The authors of the "Rejected Addresses" are two brothers of the name of Smith, lawyers

I have just read a pretty good poem, called "Agnes, the Indian Captive," written by a brother of Mr M*****'s, and dedicated to *him*

Mrs Graham's book makes much noise here—abused, of course, on every side There are two or three copies in Calcutta; but I have not yet succeeded in seeing it

Dr Wilson has published a translation of a Sanscrit poem, called the "Cloud Messenger," extremely well done It does him great credit, very far better than the translation you saw of the "Indian Seasons"

I am so engaged all day, that I can scarcely look into a book My friend, Dr G*****, has become the editor of the "Mirror." He, Commodore

H*** and several others, purchased Mr Bruce's shares. I have given him the pieces of poetry we marked and have desired, when they are inserted, it may be done without any signature whatever

I am sorry the C*****s are not going up for you would have liked them, I am sure. This house is an extremely pleasant one—and *improving* too for we have French constantly spoken by French visitors very often coming—reading aloud—puzzles—anagrams &c. &c.—all exactly in the way I like.

I have had several games at chess with Sir W***** B***** Major L*** J*** P***** and some others and have been very successful with them all—only lost one game—no credit lost however—two castles and a bishop to a queen, when one of the castles marched inadvertently into the queen's check, leaving me in such a situation that I could not rally I would soften my losses to any one but you but here I represent Moorshedabad and must not lose any of its character But I must not speak of chess now—my sheet is closing

LETTER LXXIV

29th September 1813

I MUST not leave Calcutta without once more writing, though I have but little to say, and that little all bewildered and confused from the bustle I am in from my near departure. We leave town to-morrow morning, positively. Indeed the ship has been quite ready some time, but the pilot would not move her till the spring-tides were over, fearing to lose her anchors and cables.

I shall leave Bengal with a very, very heavy heart—my only cheering hope, that of soon visiting it again. But forwards—I ought to look forwards, yet my eyes will be refractory, and, in spite of myself, I cannot but turn them very often to what I have left. I must try to drown all these reflections by plunging deep into the study of Malay and Dutch—but what horrible substitutes!

To change the theme, however. And first, of

one which at present engrosses the whole attention of Calcutta—Lord Moura. He has at length arrived at the Sand-heads. The news of it came last night, and a very large train are flocking down the river to meet him. From Madras a letter was received from him yesterday to Sir G***** N***** but not a line to Lord M***** This does not augur much friendship between them the short time they are here together and, though this ground is so trifling yet many people assume on it that several of Lord M*****'s late appointments will be annulled.

His predecessor by the way has behaved very ungraciously in my case. Mr R*** told him, in the beginning of the month, that I should sail about the 15th, and he promised that his letter should be ready before that time. Sir G***** N***** reminded him also by talking of it to him yet the time passed and no letter. I then went to him with T***** He enquired particularly when I should sail which I then believed would be the 20th. Again a promise—and again forgotten. Mr R*** and I again called on him and he then assured us the letter should be sent next day

Young E****, too, promised to remind him—yet this is Wednesday, and none has come. Mr R*** will ask him once more to-day; and if he choose, as he perhaps may, to forget once more, I must go without it. The doing so, particularly as my expectation of having it has been mentioned to General N*****, and probably by Mr E*****, to Mr Raffles, will be vastly agreeable! Still, there will be one consolation in it—I may the sooner return. Of course, I cannot doubt his lordship's intentions in my favour, and expect yet to receive his letter; but it would have been more handsome not to have given me the irksome office of this repeated reminding. He should have known the proverb—"Who gives quickly, gives twice."

Sir G***** N***** has behaved very differently—not a moment's waiting—not even to be asked for them at all. He and Lady N***** have both written by another ship, and have given me letters to take in my hand. I have received the extremest kindness from them both during my stay here—dining with them two or three times a week, in short, nothing could be kinder. Sir

G***** N***** has promised to bear me in his recollection, whenever any opportunity occurs here of doing me service by writing or speaking

Without doubt, Java will be a King's government. He therefore may very greatly promote my interests by knowing most probably the military governor that will be sent there and by recommending me to him. I have said a great deal of myself—but you are so kind that I do not fear allowing my pen to take its course.

Yours of the 22d has been quite a treat to me. I read over your account of Moorshedabad parties with the greatest interest—dashed only with many a regret that I was not there * * * *

A propos of riddles I have at length discovered the answer to the long rebus you have beginning
 An ancient city of no small renown It is
 “Shrowsbury!! The solution to the several lines are—ship heavens ringing (bells) execution whistling submission beauty Venus riches, and youth. Some of these answers are indifferent, and the title given to Shrowsbury is very questionable

I always puzzled my brains by fancying it must

be in Italy or Greece How to thread the needle I cannot describe to you—but it is a trick

Since writing the above, Lord M****'s letter has arrived—the result of Mr R***'s visit, I conclude. I own the delay of it vexed me greatly, for my friends here were constantly asking whether I had it—and troubling Mr R*** so much was very unpleasant I shall now go fully armed into the lists, and hope to write you of success

Lord Moura is expected to arrive in town to-morrow evening, or the morning after Calcutta to-day, between the Barrackpore play and his lordship, is quite deserted Mr and the Miss C*****s are gone to the first on a visit to your friend Mrs H***

Once more—but I hope not for a very long time—adieu! And may every blessing, every happiness, my dear Mrs —, be with you. Let them but equal my wishes, and you will have nought left to desire

LETTER LXXV

Java, December 1818.

AT length I have the pleasure of addressing you from my journey's end—this dreadful island of Java dreadful however only in report, for I never saw a more beautiful country or experienced a more agreeable climate. Batavia alone is unhealthy somewhat from its near vicinity to a large mud-bank along the sea-coast but very much more from the habits of its inhabitants, the Dutch who living most grossly as they do every where sleep after every meal, shut their houses closely up during the day and sit in the evening drinking drams of their own country liquor by the side of vile dank ditches dignified by the name of canals. This is the regular routine and with such it is hardly to be wondered at that three out of five was the average annual mortality. The English by adopting quite an opposite system preserve their health now

as well as in Bengal. there is hardly any sickness among them Batavia itself is certainly a low, unwholesome spot, and, so strong its ill repute, that no Englishman ventures to sleep there a single night—they all reside at Weltevreden and Ryswick, pleasant towns at about six miles' distance, and if they are obliged to have offices in the city, visit them in the morning, and come out in the afternoon. But I am speaking of custom, &c, very decidedly, when I have seen so little that I have no right to advance any opinion on the subject. The city of Batavia itself, is, I think, very handsome, and particularly striking to a new-comer, as being totally unlike any thing either in Bengal or England. The streets are broad and clean, mostly with rows of trees at the sides, and canals in the middle, and the houses, which touch each other as in England, are particularly neat—all red-tiled, abundantly glazed, and many with facings of the Dutch painted small slabs, and marble floors, forming altogether an odd, but very pleasing appearance. I wrote to my father immediately after my arrival here, by the Hooghly, but was then so hurried, knowing only of its being about to sail an hour before the packet was off, that I could only write that letter, and

desired him, therefore to communicate its contents to you. The Discovery also sailed from hence three days ago but I would not write at all by her as letters by the present conveyance must reach Bengal much sooner. This will go in the Hector to Madras, and from thence, of course overland. There is a chance even that it will arrive before the Hooghly which went *via* Banca and Penang. I must therefore write as under that supposition and you I hope will excuse the repetition should it prove erroneous. We arrived here on the 3d after a very pleasant passage from Boncoolen where I had spent ten days extremely agreeably with Mr S——. On first landing I found not a single person at home to whom I had any letters, though so abundantly stocked in that way many being in other parts of the island, and those still stationed here gone to a great fête given in the interior by a Dutch gentleman. I was obliged to go on board again, therefore the first night but I have had too kind a reception since to complain of any want of hospitality. I sent my letters up to General Nightingale who resides at a most beautiful spot here about thirty miles from Batavia and he immediately sent me down an invitation to come up and

live with him until provision could be made for me which, he did not doubt, would be very soon Mr Raffles, he said, was in the eastern part of the island, and that he himself should sail on the 15th, in the Malabar cruiser, to join him at Soorabaya. where he would take me with him I accordingly came up here, and am now very pleasantly settled with the general till something is decided respecting me, which must be soon We went down to Weltevreden on the 13th, with the intention of being ready to sail, but the general has altered his mind, he finds that his presence is not indispensably necessary, and as, at this season, travelling on account of the rains would prove very disagreeable, he defers his trip till the month of March My letters to Mr Raffles I have, however, sent to him by Major J***** who went to him a day or two after I arrived, being appointed resident at Solo, the best and most respectable appointment in the island General Nightingale has written to Mr Raffles about me, and it will depend on his answer whether I shall proceed to him by the Malabar, which is to sail in about a week, or wait here his return, which will be towards the latter end of January, very probably the latter I

am not idle at present Mr Assey the secretary who is constantly up here gives me employment in writing letters making extracts &c. &c., which teaches me much and gives me a good insight into the way business is carried on here I expect that Mr Raffles will desire that I shall continue in *this department* under his care until he has some situation vacant for me and I shall be well pleased at the arrangement Any thing in the scribbling way so that it be something somewhat less mechanical than mere copying will be agreeable for I have a little passion—not itch as my good friend Mr D*** calls it—for pen and ink. At present however I shall not give him reason to exclaim against my love of long letters for however inclined I may be and inclined I always am when addressing you, to give my pen ample employment I have not the time to do it Captain D**** of the *Hecate*, perhaps you know him has breakfasted here to-day and announced that he will sail to-morrow—rather sudden intelligence and, to make it still more provoking just as I was sitting down to devote the whole day (what an escape!!! D*** will cry out) to my Moorsshedabad friends Mrs N***** chial

lenged me at chess The morning is past, we dine at four, and Captain D**** is off immediately after I will not, therefore, make excuses for my scrawling, or the shortness of my letter.

By the next opportunity, I hope to *amuse* D**** with a sheet or two extra, and to tell you that I am at last fixed in some appointment, I hope, in this neighbourhood, but more probably at some of the out-stations

P**** G****, you will know before this reaches you, is again returned to Bengal Your letter to him I will therefore send you back. I would enclose it in this, but that I have left it with my boxes at Weltevreedon

You will be surprised to hear that I have seen B** A*** Concluding, of course, that he was at Amboyna, I did not, immediately on my arrival, make inquiries after him, but learned he was here by accidentally hearing his name mentioned I instantly posted off, and found him at Ryswick, on the eve of departure for Port Jackson He was looking not at all well, being but just recovered from a very severe illness, which had obliged him to quit Banca, where he held a very good appointment, which he was obliged to resign, unfortunately,

to come here and from hence he was ordered by the doctors, to take a voyage to strengthen his constitution, which was much injured by his severe illness and a relapse would have been dreadful. A ship being on the point of sailing for Port Jackson he was advised to go there and this advice he has followed. Poor B*•! thus fever has been particularly unfortunate for him obliging him to give up a situation where he had had begun even to save money and carrying off what he had saved—between two and three thousand rupees—in expenses from Banca to Batavia, and from hence to Port Jackson. I do not know what his appointment was nor can I just now learn but it gave him three or four hundred rupees above his pay

He was quite recovered from his illness when I saw him and wanted only strength to be quite well again. I saw him but for a few hours. He sailed in the Frederick He made most anxious inquiries after his father and yourselves, reproaching himself bitterly for his neglect of writing and expressing the greatest gratitude that you remembered him which he said he did not deserve On this score I did not spare him telling him that he certainly had behaved very ill and begging he would write just

a few lines to his excellent father. He promised he would certainly do so, and send me the letter to forward to you with mine, but this he had not done, and the idle young gentleman, I fear, has not written at all. You know poor B**, he has the best inclinations possible, but he cannot conquer his indolence in this way. Pray, remember me most kindly to his father, and by the next opportunity you shall hear more of him. At present, the first dinner bell is ringing, and I must conclude before I have communicated a thousand things, or made a thousand inquiries.

Oblige me by sending this, with the enclosed, to my father. My letter to him, by the Hooghly, may possibly not have arrived, and that provoking Captain of the *Hecate* has given so short a notice. Pray write me a long letter about yourself. Pray excuse this hurried scrawl. Consider it, in the magazine phrase, as a—"to be continued."

LETTER LXXVI

April 1814.

I did not write by the last cruiser but indeed I could not help it To you, however it is not necessary to make an excuse for you know too well the pleasure I feel in addressing you to attribute my silence either to indolence or forgetfulness I was positively so engaged till the moment of its sailing that I could not have mastered a sheet. The only few scribbled lines I sent were to my father—and those written after the ship was dispatched—at a venture of reaching it

You will laugh at my being so mightily occupied but recollect into how new a situation I have thus suddenly fallen —every thing to learn—and yet to proceed at once as if every thing had been learned. The best proof I can give you of my diligence is the not having read a single novel, a single poem or played three games at chess since

I have been with Mr Raffles—but above all, my omission by the late cruiser says every thing

I have some little ambition, and, being placed in a situation so far above my expectations, I will at least strive to the utmost to acquit myself so as to justify, in some measure, the partiality that has been shown me

You will have been astonished to hear of my appointment It is one of the most respectable, and certainly the most pleasing to myself, for, had I had free choice of situations I should have selected this—that is, consulting my inclination only—ability will come by and by, at least I will try hard for it My salary has been fixed at 1200 rupees per month, which also has exceeded my expectations—but Mr Raffles, General Nightingale, and Mr Hope, are all more kind to me than I can express.

I enclose you a copy of the letter I have received, advising me of this You will perceive by it the nature of my duties—not a little extensive They keep me as closely to my desk as even D*** in his busiest time is kept Indeed, I generally begin at daylight, and, with only such *gross* intervals as breakfast and dinner, keep at it till eleven

at night. I unluckily was appointed at the worst period in the year for business when despatches were to be framed both for England and Bengal. My predecessor had always been engaged in depuration settling districts, &c. so that every thing was in heavy arrears and consequently I have had to slog hard. But my way is now more smooth and I shall go on, I may venture to say pretty well.

All this is sad egotism but you desired me to give you a particular account of myself, and all I do wish is that you may pay me well in kind—I never can hear enough of dear Coosimbazar. I have now from my window a prospect of the most beautiful picturesque scenery. The descent from the house almost precipitate—in the bottom a valley filled with rice with a romantic little village on the banks of a stream which rushes down by twenty, torrents and roars, foaming over rocks innumerable in the background, a majestic range of mountains, wooded to the top and capped in clouds the nearest not more than twenty miles off nothing indeed, can exceed the beauty of the scene. I wish I possessed a little *limning* skill to embody it for you on paper yet such is the power of association that the red road and stunted cedar avenue or even the

muddy lane and dead walls of the Baboos' houses and Portuguese chapel, as I passed them in my breakdown buggy and Rungpore tattoo, pleased me much more. How often do I look back! yet it is an impolitic retrospect. Like dreams of the *beau-idéal* it spoils all taste for the dull present—mark, however, I am not gloomy or dissatisfied, I was certainly soured by inactivity before I came, but I have now opportunities for exertion, and am most grateful for what has been done for me.

In speaking of Mr Raffles, you will think me, perhaps, biassed by his kindness to me, but really, setting this aside, and judging impartially from what I have seen of him, and I have now seen and *marked* him closely three months, I do not hesitate to say, that I think most highly of him. He is a superior character—perfectly the gentleman—of the most polished manners—and of a suavity of disposition I have not seen exceeded. Thus, perhaps, is his foible, he is rather *too* good-natured, and, as a governor, might have had a squeeze of acid mingled in his composition with advantage. He is possessed of considerable information on most subjects, and is at once the gentleman, the scholar, and the man of business.

In the latter way he has few equals. I never saw any one more indefatigable, nor one who performs it in better or more rapid style. From morn till night he is employed, and scarcely the minutest detail on any point escapes him. This is warm panegyric, but it is sincere. To you I would not utter a sentiment I did not feel. He is no cold plodder no calculator of merely his own interest but possesses a high energetic mind, an ardent imagination and I could pledge myself for his even chivalric honour in short for myself I truly not merely like and respect, but love him he appears to me so amiable.

In size he is a little man, but has a very pleasing countenance quick intelligent eyes and the *tout ensemble* of his features reminded me at first of Colonel H***** which you will admit to be good *à la Lavater*

* * * * *

Next comes our chief secretary Mr Assoy I cannot say enough of him and like him very much indeed. He is an excellent second to Mr Raffles—quite as indefatigable and as capable. With two such examples before me it is impossible to shrink from any toil. A few is uncommonly clever quick

and well-informed, and, what is better, joining to an amicable disposition a fine manly independence of character. He is, in short, universally esteemed and fit for any thing. It is no slight proof in his favour that General G*****, though cordially disliking him as a friend of Mr Raffles, did not in any of his attacks—and he spared few—venture a syllable against Assey.

Of course there are constantly a crowd of visitors in the house, but the above, with a doctor, a Dutch secretary, and myself, are the only permanent members. The doctor, Sir Thomas Sevestre, is an original, too; but I have not time to describe him; nor, strangers as they all are to you, will this amuse you, but my pen always carries me away.

LETTER LXXVII

Baitenzorg, April 1814.

MR RAFFLES invited me in the kindest manner to live with him while on the island. Of course nothing could be more agreeable than such an invitation and *me* ~~voce~~ regularly domesticated. My office is in the house as is *Arsey* s also

This place is near forty miles from Batavia most beautifully situated, and has what is called a fine cool, bracing climate the season almost always the same—never sufficiently warm to make a punkah necessary yet cool enough to make a blanket agreeable—for me but I am quite heterodox this way It is very chilly and damp and not one tenth so pleasant as the Bengal gentle heats. There is a great deal too much rain owing to our close vicinity to the mountains The clouds come rolling down them and favour us with a shower

every afternoon, and I detest rain—it makes both body and spirits uncomfortable

I have paid what attention I could to the languages, and understand somewhat of Malay; but I can get no leisure for regular study. As soon as I am able to do this, I intend to devote it to the study of Javanese, which is an entirely different language, and possesses a distinct character

By the way, you do not perhaps know where *Java* is, that is, according to its acceptation here, Batavia is *not* in it, nor is Bantam. It begins at Cheribon, and includes only the eastern part of the island. Now, as I have travelled over *Java*, I ought to have given you my adventures there; but we travelled with such rapidity, and our reception every where was so *bruyant* and flourish-of-trumpet fashion, that I could not have methodised then, and have not had opportunity since. But I was extremely pleased with my journey, and much gratified with the *sights*—as plays, *ombres-chinoises*, antiquities, pageants, tiger, buffalo, hog, goat, dog, and quail fights, &c &c &c

The island is, certainly, the most beautiful I ever saw. Indeed the scenery among the mountains exceeded any thing I had ever imagined even

The hog and goat fight was vastly amusing. A wild hog and beautiful goat were turned into a small arena, a stool being allowed the goat to leap on occasionally. At first he was very cautious and watching an opportunity jumped down and butted the hog whenever he turned his back. His escapes and frights were comical in the extreme but, in a very short time he had the better, and at length beat the hog from place to place, till he fell quite exhausted and vanquished.

Next followed a battle-royal—three wild hogs six dogs and the victorious goat. The hogs were torn to pieces, most of the dogs in the same state but the goat as fresh and frolicsome as ever. Never was combatant more impartial. hog or dog were the same to him, and all most studiously avoided him.

The tiger and buffalo fights afforded little sport. The latter gains almost invariably an easy conquest.

But I must not ramble on in this way any more. I return you P. G. . . . a letter and thank you as much for it as if I had had the pleasure of delivering it. His two books I would also return but I have mislaid one of them. They shall be sent by the next opportunity.

If Mrs H**** is still at Berhampore, pray remember me to her, and tell her that I had the pleasure of seeing her brother at Samarang. He is not in any situation, but is worth a considerable sum of money, I heard, and bears a very respectable character. His wife—you may set her mind at ease by telling her she is not a Malay—she is Dutch, but not of the first *chop*—born in the colony, and never was in Europe, which makes a great distinction among them.

Of pure Dutch there are few here, and the language universally talked among the Yafraus is Malay, and indeed many of them understand no other Dutch is almost as foreign as English.

Dr R***** arrived here by the Strathcarn. I have had the pleasure of seeing a good deal of him lately, and am happy to tell you that his health is wonderfully improved, all his headaches and other complaints have disappeared, and he is looking quite stout. With his usual good fortune, he tumbled out of a carriage, or rather it overset with him, a few days ago—he escaped with a severe bruising. He has just gone with General Nightingale to the eastern part of the island. The

General is going a tour through the several stations and R***** accompanies him

The Doctor has some little hopes of prize-money but I fear he will be disappointed. The Rajah of the neighbouring island of Bali some time ago sent over a prow with contraband goods which was of course seized but, considering his probable ignorance of custom regulations the government very liberally ordered the release of the vessel and wrote to him a mild letter hoping he would not do so again.

The foolish little chief was however indignant and not content with reprisal by seizing a small boat of ours sent over an expedition of about fifteen others.

They landed at Banyowangia, where a Lieutenant Davis was resident. Him they attacked, but having a guard of less than twenty Sipahcees he fought stoutly and cut them to pieces not thirty escaped to tell of their defeat. Our loss was two men.

This Rajah certainly deserves a little more chastigation and General Nightingale will use his discretion in returning or not the compliment of inva

sion, but I think the Rajah will make such submissions, and so pray to be pardoned, that a Bali war will not be waged.

When I began writing this, I thought a cruiser would go to Bengal. The Antelope was daily expected from Banca for this purpose, but having overstayed her time, a small vessel called the Gessiner is taken up, which will sail to-morrow with Mr Assey. He goes to Bengal in charge of the despatches which contain Mr Raffles' replies to General G*****'s charges, that he may be ready to afford such further information as the Supreme Government may require

I do not think they will want any more, for the replies are full, clear, and will, I trust, be decisive, but if they should, Assey is master of every subject relating to this island. I have already said enough of him. He is equal to any thing, and I know not superior talents or finer disposition. I feel the warmest friendship for him, and, should you chance to see him, I need not ask you to show him attention. You will, I am sure, like him. He is a particular friend of T*****'s, which will be a recommendation to you, I know. He speaks of paying Berhampore a visit, if he has time. I hope he may

He does not go up to Bengal as a mere agent of Mr Raffles in this business but is sent with the entire concurrence of the Council and carries with him the strongest letters from General Nightingale and Mr Hope, to all their friends. They are both much attached to him indeed, he is deservedly an universal favourite—esteemed by every one I shall pray heartily for his return for we shall feel his absence here For myself it will give me a considerable increase of business but that I do not care about. I am willing to do my utmost

LETTER LXXVIII

April 1814

ON Assey's departure, it was first arranged that I should have been acting secretary in his absence, and a resolution of Council was drawn out to that effect, but, on further consideration, it was thought better to leave the appointment vacant. There were several reasons for this. Assey's absence will, we hope, be so short, that it is hardly worth making the appointment. There is, too, a deputy secretary, who, though not sufficiently in Mr Raffles' confidence to be appointed to this, and who has, indeed, always been confined to the details of the Batavia office, yet this kind of supercession would vex him, perhaps, much, and for two or three months only it is not worth it. It would have been unpleasant to myself, indeed, for I like Mr *****; he is a pleasant young man, and I should not have liked to have been the cause of annoying his feel-

ings for the more actingship of a month or two I heard therefore, with pleasure, the present arrangement settled. There is no acting secretary to be appointed but Mr ***** and myself are to divide the duties he keeping what he at present chiefly manages—the Batavian business and myself—the Buitenzorg

Mr Raffles lives here constantly and almost all the offices are here at least all that Mr Raffles is particularly interested in. I must, for D***'s satisfaction, give you the names of the departments which I am to have the conduct of—Secret and Political, Foreign Dependencies Military Revenue and Judicial. I hope D*** will now consider me with proper respect. In real truth I am so surprised myself at tumbling into all this business that I can hardly believe myself awake.

I am to be appointed however acting private secretary and shall have some increase of letters by that too. Now I am going over all my honours I must not omit to mention that I am a member of that most celebrated and flourishing body—the Society of Arts and Sciences at Batavia. Contribution however is out of the question. I despair almost ever to read or write again on *my own*

account Like D**** I must now give all my time to my honourable employers, and earn my salary as well as I can

Should Assey visit your neighbourhood, I need not ask you to be very civil to him—both D*** and yourself would, I am sure, be pleased with him I cannot in this letter enter on the merits of the dispute between Mr Raffles and General G***** But as I would rather have your opinions than any other's I know, and would sooner gain you as a friend, to any friend of mine, than the Governor-General himself, I will give you a regular account, or abstract, of the charges and replies. This I have begun, but am afraid I shall not be able to finish in time. I have, however, two or three hours to-morrow morning that I can devote to it, and in that I will get on as far as I can This, however, must be strictly confidential and private, for, situated as I am, it might not look well in me to discuss these points But I betray no confidence All particulars are necessarily—from the enquiries, and proceedings that have been necessarily founded on them—notorious here It is the common subject of conversation every where—and a hundred letters will convey what mine does, though not,

perhaps in such dry regularity or an attempt at it. Mr Raffles too wishes every part of his conduct to be open to public view. He courts every inquiry—and the more he is known the more he will rise in estimation.

To acquit my conscience entirely I mentioned to Assey that I wished to write to my particular friends on the subject of this business among the other news of Java, and asked whether it was wrong. The reply was— It will in all probability be so generally known soon, that you may write what you like in my opinion"—and, accordingly I have indulged my pen. But nevertheless show it only to General P***** and oblige me by telling me what his and D***'s opinions are. Yourself I do hope will think with me on this point—I could not bear that you should be ranged on the opposite side. Pray do be for Mr Raffles, and let not all my paper and ink be lost. General Nightingale and Mr Hope have taken a decided part in his favour yet the General was before a friend of G*****s—but the inquiries he made and the unanimous evidence he heard carried conviction with them. He said at once in the handsomest manner— When I came to the island I came with

unfavourable impressions of Mr Raffles, but it did not require to know him two days to be undeceived. Yet my part was resolved on—to preserve neutrality if any thing of this kind occurred. But now, when I see innocenceso trampled on—such calumnies attacking it—I cannot but come forward, and will support Mr Raffles to the extent of my power.” Was not this noble, handsome conduct? But General Nightingale is *un homme comme il y en a peu*—a truly good man

Mr Assey carried from him not only the warmest letters on the subject to all his friends in Bengal, but he has written by Captain T*****, who has taken a copy of the despatches to England, to all his friends there, and those friends are not weak ones

G***** has raised all this—but “can he lay it when it is raised?” I think not. I must not be so full of these matters as to omit to acknowledge your welcome letters of the 30th November and 9th December, which I received by Dr R*****. A thousand thanks for all your good wishes. I am discontented no longer—but very busy and contented. Happiness, you know, is not to be expected in the absence of so many dear friends.

My father has not sent me any of the journal you speak of. I have had but half-a-dozen lines from him giving me intelligence of my youngest sister's marriage. * * * * *

But how I talk to you of family matters. I know I may talk of them for you know all our domestic politics.

How much I am obliged to you for all the Moorshedabad news! I love to read of your parties and amusements. I am not, like Horace Walpole an admirer of mere *noms propres* but *les noms propres* in your letters have so many pleasing associations that I am delighted to see them.

Your excellent uncle's remembrance of me is most gratifying. I need not ask you to say every thing for me to him you know how I respect, and, I may add love him. I wish I could please him with some account of B. A. but we have had no arrivals from New South Wales since he left this.

I am very glad you at length know the C*****s. They will improve on you every day and I hope you saw much of them in Calcutta. Miss C***** is, in my opinion a model of what a young lady ought to be and I saw her closely living in the house for two months.

Do not lose your chess I must do so necessarily, for I have no opportunities to play, and my only antagonists have been Mrs N***** and Assey I may venture to say, I can beat them both, but they play very good games, (mark the implication,) and I should improve by playing with them, but want of leisure will not allow Assey and myself, though living together, did not play a game I believe, for three months, and Mrs N***** I see only once or twice a-month now, and shall not, at all, for the next four or five She is an extremely pleasant ladylike lady, and I have found her all that General M***** told me I should

If Campo be with you, or in your letters to Rungpore, make my warmest remembrances To General P***** and his family, I need not ask to remember me You know how I like him

I have sent through J P***** some half-dozens of Japan soy to D*** General P*****, M*****, &c These are scanty quantities, but I could get the little I did with considerable difficulty, and all the nicknackeries in the way of boxes, &c, were bought long before I could visit the shops, being forty miles from Batavia, and seldom visiting it

I am disappointed at this extremely, for the things, though trifling in value are rarities in Bengal. We shall however have another investment from that quarter this year and I will be more provident

R***** tells me he has succeeded in getting from a friend, who was an early purchaser a Japan cloak, which he has sent to B***** Is not this provoking? D*** and the two Generals not to be sent any to—but the market is passed They shall however, I am determined be full mandarins the next investment.

To keep in D***'s good graces I must close this letter—it is very long wanded.

Pray ask D*** to write me sometimes at his leisure I want to know how Buddanmatty and Putkabarry got on—and other such matters that I can't ask a lady to write of

LETTER LXXIX

April 1814

I WROTE you a long letter very lately, which I hope you have received. A second one, containing a view of General G*****'s affair with Mr Raffles followed, but was too late for the Gessina—its fate I have not yet learned. It has, I hope, been put into the packet of the Mary, and the delay will then have been trivial; but if it has been sent by the Virginia, I shall be very sorry, for she has just sprung a leak, which may detain her in this port a considerable time. Taking it for granted you have received it however, by the Mary, I will give you the sequel to this long, very long story

* * * * *

I believe I forgot to ask you to congratulate C***** for me, on his marriage. Mr Hope

also desires me to send his kindest remembrances to him.

How does H***** succeed this year? Pray remember me to him, and tell him that Java is an extremely fine country and has numerous good appointments in it. I hope he has not given up his intention of coming here. There seems to be no prospect of a change in the government here, for some time between King and Company as three large China ships are *posted* to this island in the next season

The papers I enclose, are for your own and D***'s information and amusement and I wish our friend General P***** to read them. I write thus very hurriedly

NOTE BY EDITOR

Another packet was forwarded some time after this, but was unfortunately lost, and early in 1815, the friend to whom most of the above letters were addressed, received the melancholy intelligence of Mr Addison's death from a medical gentleman who had been at Java.

LETTER LXXX

Madras, March 1815

MY DEAR MRS ****,

It is with sincere and unfeigned sorrow I have to communicate to you the melancholy intelligence of the death of our excellent young friend, George Addison, who fell a victim to that baneful scourge the Batavia fever, a few days before I left that place. He had accompanied the governor on a short cruise to the straits of Sunda; and on his return, when landing from the vessel, got wet with

the surf and sat during the evening in his wet clothes. This is the only ostensible cause of his illness as at the time of its attack, he was in excellent health. He however remained well for several days after and on the Sunday morning preceding his attack, he was some hours with me giving me his commands for Bengal in good health and fine spirits. On the Tuesday he felt languid and heavy and disinclined to move. Wednesday he had a smart attack of fever in the forenoon, but it went off at night. Next evening it returned and as he was then at Buitenzorg the governor's country residence forty miles from town, Mr Assey who was with him and Sir Thomas Sovestre a Madras surgeon sent an express to the governor with a letter for me. I was paying a farewell visit to him when it arrived, on Friday forenoon. He immediately ordered his carriage and despatched troopers to all the stages to have horses in readiness and I was with him in about four hours but alas! too late to do any good. He was in a state of stupor but on being roused and my name being mentioned, he just for a moment lifted his eyes, as if sensible to the sound. He again immediately sunk into the same state and con-

tinued so until about four on Saturday morning, when he expired. It must be a severe blow to his poor afflicted father.

Mr Raffles was most severely affected when I communicated the melancholy event on my return. He has sustained a severe loss by his death, and laments him much. He is to write Mr Addison when his state of mind will admit. Poor George, the day he visited me, brought with him a silk cloak for his father, and three japan boxes for me, to take round with me as presents. one for you, one for Mrs C*****, and one for Miss C*****. I am not yet certain when I shall reach Bengal, &c.—Yours very sincerely,

J ROBERTSON

About the same time a letter was received by the same friend from the afflicted father which is annexed as an affecting tribute to the amiable character of this lamented young man.

Keerpoy March 1815.

MY DEAR MRS *****

I have to return you my most grateful heart felt thanks for your very kind most friendly letter of the 3d instant which I found in a most powerful degree condoling and consoling To you who so fully knew and who so highly estimated my poor departed boy it would be superfluous to write of his merits or of the magnitude of my loss. That George enjoys in his removal to a better world all the joys and happiness promised by our blessed Saviour I am fully convinced of for I declare most solemnly I knew not nor ever suspected he was addicted to any vice He was religious and full of faith in Jesus Christ By death he suffers not in being removed from a world of troubles pain and woe I should—I ought to resign him without repining The task is hard

and difficult My tongue utters my submission to the decree of the Almighty of the universe, Creator of all, yet my heart suffers not from my own individual loss, but it feels for the great distress his mother, and his sisters, and brother, must most painfully experience in his death He was beloved—adored by them I looked to George as the future guardian and protector (when I might be no more) of those I hoped to leave to his protecting care That hope is no more! God has taken my son—I must submit—I will not murmur

* * * * *

I return the letter Robertson addressed to you. Allow me to say I am extremely gratified that he is bringing round to you a slight memorial of regard from a poor young man, who esteemed, who valued you beyond all others His friendship for you and D*** was not to be exceeded—With esteem and respect, I am yours much obliged,

J ADDISON.

EDINBURGH BALLANTYNE AND HUGHES.

